Interview with Thomas D. Boyatt

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR THOMAS D. BOYATT

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is March 8, 1990. This is an interview with Ambassador Thomas D. Boyatt on Behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Tom Boyatt is also the president of the Association for Diplomatic Studies. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Tom, could you give me a short run-down on your background, where do you come from, before we get into the Foreign Service?

BOYATT: I was born and raised in Wyoming, Ohio which is a little town just outside of Cincinnati. I went to high school there, a very famous high school I might say. In my generation, W.H.S. produced three ambassadors and one president of Princeton. And from there to Princeton University.

Q: When did you graduate from Princeton?

BOYATT: In 1955. I then went to Fletcher for a year and got a MA. By that time the draft board was breathing down my neck, so I enlisted in the Air Force, and was selected for Officer's Candidate School, went to Officer's Candidate School, was assigned to the Strategic Air Command where I served for two years, then I had about six months at the Pentagon in intelligence, got out and joined the Foreign Service.

Q: What attracted you first to foreign affairs?

BOYATT: I was in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton, which is an undergraduate major, as well as a graduate school, and each semester the students in that school, in addition to their regular course work, do a policy conference. The conference is built around a problem. Now we're talking the early "50s, and I participated in a conference on Puerto Rico as an example of an underdeveloped area that was becoming developed. That was the subject of the conference, and they sent myself and three classmates, one of whom was Ralph Nader by the way, to Puerto Rico to actually see the island at spring break. And I became so entranced with this whole business of foreignness, and other languages, and other cultures, that I switched from the domestic side of the Woodrow Wilson School to the international side and decided right then and there that I wanted to be in the Foreign Service. That's why I went to Fletcher, and I took and passed the exam while I was at graduate school, and then my commission was deferred until I got out of the Air Force.

Q: So you came in when?

BOYATT: '59.

Q: Could you describe a bit...I assume you had a Foreign Service class?

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: Could you describe a bit who were those new officers?

BOYATT: The vast majority of them were like me. First of all, they were men, I think we had one woman in our class. The class was probably about 25. Most of us had finished the military, mostly as officers, and mostly out of the ROTC. We were all university graduates, several of us had graduate degrees. I would say that virtually everybody was between 25 and 30.

Q: Can you give an idea of how you looked upon the Foreign Service as a career?

BOYATT: You must understand that I had come out of the “Princeton in the nation's service” tradition—Woodrow Wilson, and all that. I looked upon it as a chance to serve, as a chance for excitement, and travel, and change, and conceivably, hopefully, as a chance to contribute to foreign policy.

Q: Not to belabor this, but how did you look upon America's role at that time?

BOYATT: We ran the world. That's literally true. When I was at Fletcher the international economics course was devoted to the dollar gap. The problem was how to manage our trade surplus, and everybody else's development problems. Hell, within ten years, certainly within 20, it was the reverse, but at that point we had all the gold, most of the industrial power, most of the technology. We didn't have a monopoly on atomic weapons, but we certainly had a monopoly on the best delivery systems, and we still had a people who were more or less unified behind the government's role as world managers, world policemen.

Q: Moving on, your first post was where? And could you give the dates, and then what were you doing?

BOYATT: My first post was Antofagasta, Chile. I was a vice consul. I wound up running the consulate, it was a two-man consulate and the consul went away and never came back, and I did everything.

Q: This was from 1960 to 1962.

BOYATT: '60 to '62. I performed all the consular functions, including shipping and seamen in those days, and did the economic reporting, and did the political reporting, and did the representation in that part of the world.

Q: What were we doing? In your particular place...

BOYATT: Why were we there?

Q: Why were we there

BOYATT: A simple answer to that. Originally we had put consulates up and down both coasts of South America because of the German threat to penetrating South America in the late "30s and early "40s. But we also had a huge American citizen presence at the copper mines in the interior so that consulate was sort of there for the care and feeding of Anaconda Copper Company, and Anglo Lautaro Nitrate Company, and Grace Lines. It was kind of US citizen/commercial type post. There wasn't a lot of visa activity.

Q: How did you find your work related to the Chilean authorities

BOYATT: Well, it was great fun for me because I was a big fish in a small pond. In a provincial society, people were invited to things by title, so I got to attend as the representative of the United States virtually every national day given by the consular corps, all the parties given by the authorities.

You'd be interested to know that while I was there I met then Senator Allende, the socialist; then Senator Frei, the Christian Democrat; and then major, later promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Augusto Pinochet. All three of the actors who played major roles in a later drama were there in the north at that time, and contacts of mine.

Q: What was the Chilean attitude towards the American Presence in Antofagasta?

BOYATT: It was the typical love-hate relationship that is so prevalent in Latin America. There was a lot of respect for the United States because of its victory in World War II, because of its progress, because of its dominance of world affairs. But there was also a great deal of resentment because of all of those things. Then you add to that the competition between Anglo and Hispanic culture in the western hemisphere which

the Anglos have dominated for the last two and a half-three centuries, and there was resentments. I think love-hate is a pretty good characterization of the attitudes.

Q: Well, to move on—we'll touch on this later on your earlier career. You had an interesting assignment for a junior officer. How did it come about? And what were the dates?

BOYATT: In this Chilean assignment?

Q: No, I mean after the Chilean.

BOYATT: My next post from '62 to '64 was the Treasury Department where I was the special assistant to the Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs. That was Robert V. Roosa, of the Roosa-Bonds. And the reason that happened was because Douglas Dillon went to Treasury as Secretary, just after he'd been Under Secretary of State. He took a couple of FSOs with him, and one of them decided that Under Secretary Roosa needed a staff assistant to help him with the administrative part of the job and I happened to know one of those FSOs who was already there, and I was recruited for that job and served in it for the next two years.

Q: What were you doing there?

BOYATT: Mainly I was managing the flow of papers, and the flow of people to Roosa himself. The Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs then, as now I believe, had responsibility for managing the debt—the internal problem—and for the external relationships of the Treasury. We were still on the gold standard at that time, you will recall. And by that time, not even ten years after I had gotten out of graduate school, where we were studying the reverse problem, there was now a glut of dollars in the world. Each one of those dollars was a potential call against our gold supply at $35.00 an ounce. So we were devising policies to generate international cooperation to sterilize those dollars.

Q: What was your impression about the people you dealt with at Treasury Obviously you'd not yet really served in State, but at that time what did you think about Treasury?

BOYATT: Brilliant. A very small, but very bright corps of dedicated professionals—but very small.

Q: What about their impression of State?

BOYATT: There was a significant amount of turf rivalry because all of the international financial questions, of course, had a political implication. And our imperative was the financial/economic one, and the Department's imperative then as now was the political relationship. So there were conflicts.

Q: How did you see some of these battles working out?

BOYATT: Well, we had Dillon and Roosa, and on the other side were Rusk and Bill Leddy. We had the horse power. On these kinds of issues we had Kennedy's ear, and later Johnson's. And I think by and large we won.

Q: Your next assignment was another two year assignment. You went to Luxembourg.

BOYATT: Yes, I did.

Q: What were you doing there? This was from '64 to '66. How did you get the job?

BOYATT: Roosa got me the job there, essentially. I was the economic-commercial officer, and he thought it would be useful to have somebody with a Treasury background. There was no Treasury officer there, so Roosa wanted to have someone with a Treasury background in Luxembourg because Luxembourg was just beginning the financial capital of Europe. I mean, officially designated as such by the communities, and still is. But the Eurobonds were being developed at that time, dollar denominated Eurobonds, and a variety of other vehicles were in the process of becoming, and I was to serve not only as

the Foreign Service person there, but as kind of the Treasury person there. And whenever they would have any of their Treasury attach# meetings, I would get invited.

Q: Was this almost your complete focus then while you were there?

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: You had an ambassador who was fairly well known in political circles in Washington, Patricia Harris.

BOYATT: About half the time, yes.

Q: Who was in the first half?

BOYATT: Bill Rivkin, of the Rivkin Awards.

Q: What was your impression about these two ambassadors?

BOYATT: They were both politically appointed ambassadors, and they were both bright, and they were both dedicated. But they both had a political agenda which was something I had never seen before. I had been accustomed to bureaucrats with just simply a bureaucratic agenda, and that was it. And each of these ambassadors had a larger political agenda. There's nothing wrong with that, it's just a fact of life.

Q: How was this translated as a political agenda? What do you mean?

BOYATT: In the case of Bill, he was a Kennedy appointee, and he took his leadership, I think, from the White House and not from the State Department. And what he was interested in as an ambassador, was what was on the White House's plate, and not what was on the State Department's plate.

Q: But in a way I can't think of anything dealing with Luxembourg that would even raise a...

BOYATT: You're right. Apart from some of these economic/financial issues, and the fact that the Luxembourgers withdrew the company that they had in NATO during our time, there wasn't that much.

Q: A company, you're talking about a military.

BOYATT: I'm talking about a military company. They had one company, artillery, I think, committed to NATO and they withdrew it.

Q: Were you involved at that time? I mean this is obviously a very small matter, but at the same time it is one of the NATO countries and for one to take its troops out, was there concern at the time this would be a snowball effect?

BOYATT: Absolutely. It was viewed with great concern by Washington. This was the period in which de Gaulle had pulled France out of NATO as well. The beginning of the European maturation process was probably in that era. When people simply no longer took orders from Washington, and began to go about their business in their own ways.

Q: From what you saw, how did the embassy react to this?

BOYATT: Well, there wasn't much we could do. We reported, and the ambassador carried out his instructions to express concern. The thing that was the most interesting to me was the degree of hand wringing inside the Department. The Department was really concerned about the whole process of the centrifugal forces in Europe being more powerful than centripetal forces.

Q: Was there anything we could do? Were there any pressures, or buttons we could push in Luxembourg?

BOYATT: No, there wasn't much we could do. The only thing that we really could have done about the NATO problem all along, the only leverage that we had was the threat to

drawdown and pull out our forces, and that was a non-playable card then. It's slightly more playable today, but it was a non-playable card then. So we were in a situation where we didn't have much choice other than to bemoan the situation.

Q: Why did Luxembourg do this?

BOYATT: Money. Sheer finances, and it was unpopular with the youth. The same reason the Belgians and the Dutch are busting to get out of NATO now. They can't wait to declare peace, and get their troops out. You will recall recently there has already been one flap along those lines.

Q: What about Patricia Harris? What was her agenda, and how did she operate?

BOYATT: I have to tell you that I had real problems with her. I've since learned that I'm not alone in that regard, a lot of people did. She was very suspicious of the career service, and from my perspective, she equated disagreement with her on professional issues, issues of substance, as disloyalty. She gave both the DCM and myself very bad efficiency reports. And in retrospect I suppose I'm thankful because I suddenly realized that there were inequities in the Foreign Service. I was an FSO-4, I'd been promoted from 8 to 4 very rapidly. Now you think about that Stuart, that's four promotions in five years and, you know, I was a hotshot. I went from being a hotshot to being in the bottom five percent of the class in one year on the basis of her one bad efficiency report. So I wrote back to someone in Personnel, some bureaucrat, and said, “This is silly. Either I wasn't as good as you've been saying I was for the last five years, or I'm not as bad as you're saying I am now.” I got this totally bureaucratic response, and I said, “To hell with it.” But from that moment began my interest in the American Foreign Service Association.

Q: Which for this you were later president of it, and a very active president. It's equivalent to the...

BOYATT: It's not too much to say that we changed the whole damn system, Stuart. We put in an employment management relations system, and we put in a grievance system. In a sense we gave power to the people, and its never been the same since. It was the view of the abusive use of power by Ambassador Harris that got me started. I suddenly realized that there were no checks and balances. There wasn't due process. More for the DCM than myself, I was young and junior, and it didn't matter so much but he got hounded out of the Service because of this. From that moment on I was a sword carrier.

Q: Then you moved to a place which was going to be your focus for some time. That was to Cyprus.

BOYATT: I came back here and studied Greek first for a year, and that's important because that's when Charlie Bray and I...Charlie was studying at some university, Lannon was around, and others. The group that later came to be called The “Young Turks” first got formed in that winter of...”formed” is too strong a word, first began meeting and talking about the future of the Foreign Service, and the profession, and the people in 1966-7. But, you're right, and then I went to Cyprus.

Q: Could you talk a little about the Young Turk movement? I might add that later on there was a report, I think while you were in Cyprus, but this was...

BOYATT: Diplomacy for the Seventies.

Q: Diplomacy for the Seventies which was considered the Young Turks report. I was one of those that was involved in this. Could you explain about your thinking, and some of the personalities in this formative time? Because it's very important to understand it from the standpoint of the Foreign Service.

BOYATT: Well, we were all groping. I think that all of us sensed that something was wrong. The State Department, and the Foreign Service, weren't being used to best effect. They still aren't today, but they weren't then as well. We were concerned about that,

we were concerned about the status of the profession. We were concerned about the power of the bureaucracy to control the people. The Foreign Service, after all, is a group of people. The State Department is a bureaucratic structure, and each one of those bureaucratic jobs has a certain amount of power. In those days it had a hell of a lot more. The bureaucratic structure was all powerful, and the people had virtually no recourse. It was extremely hierarchical, you might as well have been in the Marines during wartime. A lot of us saw something wrong with that, but nobody had a very clear picture of where we ought to go, and what we ought to do. There was a lot of churning and report writing and discussion. What emerged from these discussions was, that we needed a platform. The only platform that was around was the American Foreign Service Association. The Junior Foreign Service Officers Club was there but that was a very small, well defined group, it was by no means service-wide. So we realized that the only vehicle for having an impact was the American Foreign Service Association. And as we began to look into that we began to realize that the presidents, and the leadership of the American Foreign Service Association, it was the same people that had the top jobs in the Department. So there were two bureaucracies. Alexis Johnson, after being president of AFSA, becomes Under Secretary. When he goes to be Under Secretary Chip Bohlen becomes president of AFSA. Sort of big names and very senior people that ran AFSA. We were political enough to know that that's not where the votes were, and that it was prima facie absurd to think that Chip Bohlen could accurately represent the views of all officers, other than just a small group of senior officers. So the idea caught fire that we ought to take over the American Foreign Service Association.

Q: I belong to the same generation and the perception was that the Chip Bohlens, and the Alexis Johnsons and others, were fine outstanding people, but most of them either had, or had access to, money that would take care of themselves. So one was the career opportunities were very arbitrary, but also there were financial problems.

BOYATT: Well, sure. I mean it's absurd to think that Chip Bohlen is going to understand the problems of an FSO-8 with a wife and two kids coming back to Washington after two years overseas. They just lived in different worlds, nothing critical. I'm not trying to...

Q: No, but there was probably more than at other times. There was a tremendous generation gap of really the old Foreign Service, and the one that has been continuing. Because after World War II there was this recruitment for...I remember when I came in they were talking about a massive infusion of main street.

BOYATT: Right, geographic distribution.

Q: And we all represent that. How far did you get at this particular time?

BOYATT: We got far enough to know that there were some real problems with the profession, and to know that in order to have a platform the ideal would be to take over the American Foreign Service Association.

Q: And then you left.

BOYATT: Then I went off to Cyprus. But those that stayed behind did, in fact, take it over. I can't recall exactly the timing but at some point while I was out in Cyprus, Lannon was elected president. I know I formed the chapter in Nicosia and supported him.

Q: How did you get assigned to Cyprus? Was this by choice?

BOYATT: What happened was that Ambassador Harris wanted me out of Luxembourg, and I volunteered for Greek language training. I wanted out, and I thought it would be nice to learn Greek, and go to Cyprus and Greece.

Q: You were in Cyprus from '67 to '70.

BOYATT: That's right.

Q: What was the situation in Cyprus when you got there, as you saw it?

BOYATT: The situation on Cyprus was that the country had become independent in 1960, under a constitutional regime that compromised the interest of the 80 percent Greek Cypriot Orthodox Christian majority, and the 20 percent Turk Cypriot Muslim minority. There were, kind of like Lebanon and other places where you have this problem, all sorts of constitutional guarantees, and checks and balances, built into the system. This regime was guaranteed by Great Britain, Greece, and Turkey. Cyprus had been a British Crown Colony before that for some 80 years.

The United States, while not having an active role, had a very big interest because the two contending parties at the end of the day were Greeks and Turks. They were both in NATO, and any friction between the two unhinged the eastern flank of NATO. Archbishop Makarios, the elected president of Cyprus—a Greek Cypriot obviously—had in 1964 tried to unilaterally impose some changes in the constitution. This was stoutly resisted by the Turk Cypriots. Mainland Greek army units, and mainland Turk army units infiltrated Cyprus to aid their specific communities. There was severe fighting, a crisis. The US Sixth Fleet steamed between the two warring navies, and U.S. pressure - especially on the Turks - resulted in an uneasy truce. UN troops were interposed between the Greek Cypriots and the Turk Cypriots scattered all over the island. There was no single dividing border, rather there were Turk Cypriot enclaves all over an essentially Greek Cypriot island. And each one of those enclaves was armed, and manned by Turk Cypriots, often supported by mainland Turks, and surrounded and contained by Greek Cypriots supported by mainland Greeks.

So when I got there in '67, I was the political officer, and the Greek language officer. The political section was composed of myself and one other fellow, and he was the Turk language officer. Our job was to find out what was going on in the two communities, and

to report that and then try to influence the two communities and the two mainlands through their ambassadors to keep the lid on the situation.

Q: Here you were a Greek language officer, and the Greeks being Christian and more western, did you find that you had a hard time looking at the situation in a balanced view? Or were there built in biases because of the Greek-Turkish situation? And not only for you, but for others who came in, because I assume [overlap comment] to the Greeks than to the Turks.

BOYATT: Well, not really, Stuart. The fact of the matter is that everybody spoke English in the leadership groups. You only really needed languages out in the countryside. Business, diplomacy, and politics were conducted in English.

Q: Of course, the British had been there for so long.

BOYATT: The British had been there for 80 years, and the leaders on both sides were by-and-large British barristers. And the Turk Cypriots are very westernized. In fact, somebody once did a study of blood types and found that the blood types of the Greek Cypriots and the Turk Cypriots were much more like each other, than they were like either mainland. Anyway, we are what we think we are, not what our blood types state. The fragile peace broke down in the fall of '67, and there was a major clash.

Q: You were there at that time?

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: How did you observe it, and what did we do?

BOYATT: We didn't exactly see it coming, but we saw it coming in the sense that the situation was so tense that this sort of thing could happen at any time. What happened was that a Greek Cypriot general, General Grivas, overran two Turkish Cypriot villages and killed a lot of Turk Cypriots. At the same time that that was happening, Ralph

Denktash, who was the current leader of the Turk Cypriots, had been in exile in Turkey since '64, and he came back into the island clandestinely, and the Greeks apprehended him. And the minute that the two villages were overrun, mainland Turkey mobilized and threatened invasion, and mainland Greece mobilized and threatened to send troops to defend against the Turkish invasion. We, the United States, were very much in the middle because we feared that our two NATO allies were going to clash, as they did later, with US supplied weapons. There were several days during which the crisis got worse, and we were expecting a Turkish invasion at any moment. Meanwhile, there was frenzied diplomatic activity in all the capitals essentially trying to avert a Turkish invasion.

And our job on the island was to a) find out what was going on in both communities, and b) to try to find out what sort of elements could be fed into a negotiated solution, as opposed to a military solution. And the Turks kept turning up the pressure, doing all sorts of cute things like they sent their military attach# over to be, “Please give us the map coordinates of every house where there is an American.” They did the same thing with the Brits, “because we're planning air attacks at any minute.” That sort of stuff.

Anyway it got bad enough so that we evacuated all the women and children, and non essentials, and got down to the very core group. At that point, myself and the Turkish language officer, were going back and forth between the lines, and that was very dangerous. You know, as always, there were teenage kids manning guard posts with automatic weapons on both sides, nervous as hell. It was very tricky. In the end, Cyrus Vance was sent out by Johnson to negotiate a compromise.

Just as a sidelight, our families were evacuated to Beirut which in those days was a sea of tranquility, in an ocean of chaos.

Anyway, at the end of the day, Turkey agreed to a solution that involved the withdrawal of all mainland Greeks back to Greece.

Q: By the way, at that time weren't there Greek officers with the Greek Cypriots?

BOYATT: Right, and Turkish officers with the Turk Cypriots.

Q: Legally, I mean this wasn't...

BOYATT: No, this was illegal on both sides. If I'm not mistaken, it had been legal up to a certain point under the old constitution regime (900 mainland Greeks - 600 mainland Turks), but when that fell apart in '64 both sides flooded the island with officers, and troops, from the mainland. The solution was that all mainland Greeks would go back to Greece; that the mainland Turks would go back to Turkey; that the villagers whose villages were overrun would be able to go back to their villages; full restoration; and that there would be local talks between the two sides. We convinced the Greek Cypriots to let Denktash go, to release him into the hands of the Turk Cypriots so that he could be the person to negotiate in these local talks with Clerides on the Greek Cypriot side. The concept was that if Denktash had been shot while trying to escape, or held in jail, or whatever, there never would have been a negotiated solution. The Turk Cypriot side was divided, and here was a chance to release this guy so that he could become a strong voice for a negotiated solution.

Q: Who was doing this persuading?

BOYATT: Well, the ambassador, the DCM, and myself.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BOYATT: Toby Belcher, and Glen Smith was the DCM. I was the political officer, and we were in a full court press. We were talking to everybody that would listen. Toby was talking to the Archbishop, and to the Foreign Minister, and to Clerides; and Glen Smith was talking to the Director General of the Foreign Ministry; and I was talking to everybody else.

Q: Did both sides feel that maybe they had painted themselves into some corners and were looking for us to come up with a solution and get them out of it?

BOYATT: I don't think so. The trouble was that we were basically dealing with the armies in Greece and Turkey. The colonels had taken over in Greece earlier in '67.

Q: April 22, 1967.

BOYATT: Right, this was November 4th, and they were in charge there, and I'm sure they were convinced that with the troops that they had on the island, they could have beaten the Turks. The Turks for their part, they all felt that the only real solution was for Turkey to occupy all, or part of, Cyprus and to move all the Turk Cypriots back into the partitioned sector. What the Greek Greeks really wanted was the union of Cyprus with Greece, as in Crete, a la Crete, and to hell with the Turkish minority. And what the Turks wanted was the partition of the island, and what Makarios wanted was the continued independence of the island.

Q: Enosis, which was the union with Greece. At that time, how did the Greek Cypriots feel about it?

BOYATT: In a straight up vote, the vast majority of Greek Cypriots would have voted for Enosis, but you weren't going to have a straight up vote because at least the educated ones knew that such an action would bring the Turkish army in. So you sort of had the ideologues and the pragmatists, and the ideologues were for Enosis—Union—which means and only Enosis. The pragmatists were theoretically for Enosis, but wanted to be realistic, and what was realistic today was independence, and maybe there'll be union at some future date under terms and conditions which we can't see from here but right now the only viable solution is the continuation of an independent Cyprus.

Q: From your aspect, looking at it from Nicosia during this crisis, how did you feel that our embassies in Ankara and Athens were responding?

BOYATT: Of course, I thought they were totally spokesmen for the Greeks and the Turks. I didn't think they were being realistic at all. I'm sure they thought the same thing about us.

Q: To give an idea for somebody who is not too aware of looking at the diplomatic correspondence, the communications that go back and forth, where does something like this get resolved? We're talking about the Americans who were the professionals, so you're getting the Nicosian viewpoint of the situation, you're getting Ankara viewpoint, and you're getting the Greek viewpoint, all Americans reporting to influence our policy. How does this thing get sorted out?

BOYATT: In those days it got sorted out by George Ball. He was the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, or Deputy Secretary, one or the other. In any case, he was the seventh floor principal who dealt with Cyprus, so the conflicting viewpoints were dealt with by him essentially.

Q: Was there a certain amount of arm twisting? I'm talking about our three points of contact, our three embassies—rather rough orders coming down; you do this, and you do that.

BOYATT: Yes. In all three capitals the ambassadors were delivering messages that essentially the host countries didn't want to hear. To Turkey the message was, don't invade and accept the compromise. In Greece, the message was, pull back your troops and accept the compromise which is not going to involve Enosis. And in Nicosia, the message was, give up on Enosis, and what's more give Denktash back to the Turk Cypriots so we can get some local negotiations started.

Q: Looking back on this, was this the best way to go about this do you think?

BOYATT: Yes, I do. I think it was an excellent example of successful crisis diplomacy. The problem was, that almost the minute the crisis was over, that is to say the minute that this three or four point compromise had been established, then our colleagues in Athens and Ankara wanted to go back to business as usual. Their imperative was, for Christ's sake let's get Cyprus back on the back burner, the local talks will do that, they're negotiating under the auspices of the UN, and let's get on with the really important stuff which is negotiating our base rights in Ankara, and trying to live with the colonels, or whatever, in Greece.

Q: Tom, what was your impression of Archbishop Makarios?

BOYATT: I thought Archbishop Makarios was a masterful combination of Greek Cypriot peasant cleverness, and by that I don't mean to call him a peasant, but there's kind of a native moxie. In our culture, we say someone is street smart. Well, in that culture the guy that is smart is the guy that manages to stay free and prosperous as a peasant...he just had all of that native cunning combined with all of the grandeur and the majesty, and learning, of a 1500 year old independent church. The Autocephalous Church of Cyprus is as old as the church of Rome, and as independent.

Q: Let's say for translator, Autocephalous means...

BOYATT: Self governing, from two Greek words. Auto meaning him or self, and cephalous(?) meaning head.

Q: How about dealing with him?

BOYATT: I haven't finished the answer. The third thing, of course, that he had was an excellent modern education, and a real feeling for modern politics. Dealing with him was a great pleasure because he was very charming, and very amusing, and he had a twinkle in his eye. He had a spark. He was probably the most masterful politician diplomat I've ever seen at playing off all of the elements in a situation, and playing for time on the theory

that if you play long enough, something is going to break your way. In other words, a small country surrounded by larger countries, and then part of the east-west conflict, he had to make the most of what he had. And what he really had was agility. He was just terrific at playing off all sides against each other, and playing off the problem, playing off the problem until something changed which put him in less danger, or brought him closer to his goal.

Q: How about another character in this? Did you have any dealings, or was it completely underground at that time, Colonel Grivas?

BOYATT: I had no dealings with Grivas. Grivas was totally underground in our era.

Q: Here you were trying to reach a compromise—I mean the United States—which obviously could only mean non-Enosis.

BOYATT: Right.

Q: And there was no other way.

BOYATT: That is absolutely correct.

Q: So the United States, I would think, to the EAOKA which was the terrorist underground...

BOYATT: ...or freedom fighter, depending on your point of view.

Q: Or whatever you want to call it, so just the fact that you were trying to do this must have been an absolute threat to what they were fighting for. How did they act toward you? They were pretty good at assassinations, and why didn't they go after the Americans?

BOYATT: In the 50s and 60s, as you know, they had assassinated a lot of British colonial officers, and policemen, and innocents, including an American vice consul at one point.

The EAOKA fighters, I think, made a conscious decision not to attack the United States on the theory that could do some harm, and no good, and that they would keep pushing for an Enosis type solution. I think that what their goal was (and subsequent events proved this out) Enosis, and only Enosis. To achieve this required a take over of the government of Cyprus to make the government the entity that wanted Enosis. They thought their job in the '60s when I was there was to keep alive the flame, the purity of the ideology to increase their numbers, and to increase their strength until they got to the point where they could take over the government of Cyprus. But at any step along that process to alienate the United States would have in their judgment, and it was the right judgment, would have been a big mistake. They eventually killed an American ambassador, but we'll get to that.

Q: How did you read Makarios's feelings towards the Greek colonels, Papadopoulos and company who had taken over Greece in early '67?

BOYATT: I don't think he was ideological about it, but I don't think he liked them. I think he thought they were narrow, and above all I think he thought they were dangerous, that they might overthrow him, Makarios, which in the end they tried to do. And that they might do something reckless and stupid where Turkey was concerned, which in the end they did. So his relationship with them was one of...he was very suspicious of them. I mean, periodically Makarios, or the Foreign Minister, would go to Greece and have a round of meetings, and come back and say there was a complete identity of views between u mitera partida, which means the motherly fatherland—it's hard to translate—which, of course, we all knew wasn't true.

Q: How about Denktash? How did you find him

BOYATT: Well, we helped save his life. Initially, in the early stages of course, he was very accessible, and very prepared to discuss the Cypriot problem, and open to us, as he was to everybody. But as time went on—and I'm talking about years now—those relationships deteriorated. He's a one-man band. I mean there is no other political element—I shouldn't

really say “is” because I'm not that close to Cyprus now—but in those days there was no one who even touched him in political stature.

Q: On the Turkish side.

BOYATT: On the Turkish side, yes. He was in a class by himself.

Q: Clerides?

BOYATT: Clerides on the Greek side, who was his counterpart, but was not his equal because Clerides, and I just saw him last summer by the way for the first time in a long time, didn't have the political power. Makarios had the political power. Clerides had the constitutional power because he was the appointed negotiator in the talks, appointed by the freely elected Makarios, but Denktash was himself a power.

Q: There were two ambassadors there, one was Belcher, and the other was David Popper, maybe you want to divide it into two, but when the embassy officers, you as political counselor, and the DCM, and our ambassador, would sit down, in your hearts of hearts how did you see the situation on Cyprus working out sometime into the future?

BOYATT: Well, in '68 we all thought that a return to the status quo, with some mutually agreed adjustments, in the 1960 constitution, was very possible. There was a lot of momentum after the resolution of the '67 crisis, and the beginning of the local talks in January-February of '68. There was a lot of optimism. People thought, “Well, this will lead to a conclusion.” And we in the embassy were trying to play an activist role in finding the elements of a solution. In Athens and Ankara they couldn't have cared less.

Q: Because we had other fish to fry.

BOYATT: That's right. They just wanted Cyprus off the screen, and the problem with that was that whereas Makarios could deliver the Greek Cypriot side, the only people who could deliver the Turkish Cypriots were the mainland Turks. So we were constantly battling

with embassy Ankara because we wanted our embassy to put pressure on Denktash to compromise, and in essence they never did.

Q: Who was the ambassador in Ankara?

BOYATT: I think initially it was Bob Komer, if I'm not mistaken, and then it was Pete Hart [trans. note: Parker T. Hart, Robt. W. Komer, Wm. J. Handley]. The answer to your question, Stuart, yes, we had a vision of how this problem could be solved. The reality was that we couldn't, as it were, impose our vision on the parties.

Q: In '69 there was a change of administration between the Johnson administration and the Nixon administration. So we're only talking up to the '70s, later we'll come to the continuation of this. But while you were there, did you, and the embassy in Nicosia, see any initial change in how one felt about this coming from Washington?

BOYATT: With the change in administrations?

Q: Yes. It was probably too early anyway.

BOYATT: But even so, the people who were in control were the Atlanticists, and they were in control, interestingly enough, when Jimmy Carter came in. Of all people who talked a good pro-Greek Cypriot line, but when he won the election didn't do a damn thing. In fact, later wound up on the Turkish side like everyone else had been. There's a real problem here in this whole thing, and that is that the merits of the case are on the Greek Cypriot side. They are an 80 percent majority. How would we feel if somebody came in here and wanted to make the blacks and Hispanics a separate nation as it were, and were prepared to support them externally. We'd have a lot of trouble with that, and the Greek Cypriots had the same trouble. So in a sense, the justice was on the Greek Cypriot side, but the geopolitical realities were on the Turkish Cypriot side, and the two sort of balanced out. And as a result the solution never went anywhere. I am mortally convinced...I mean every damn problem that one lived with in those days, is today much closer to solution, except

this one. You know, Czechoslovakia is free; and there's an Egypt-Israeli peace agreement, things are changing everywhere but the Cypriot problem goes on hopelessly without progress, and those same local talks that we established in 1968—that same vehicle is still puffing away 30 years later.

Q: Did you feel next to the Jewish lobby, the other great lobby in the United States which rears its head from time to time, the Greek-American lobby, was that very noticeable at the time you were on Cyprus?

BOYATT: No, it was not. The thing that made the Greek lobby was '74. We made that lobby. I told Kissinger that.

Q: Well, now moving on, is there anything else we should cover in this period?

BOYATT: About Cyprus?

Q: Yes. You want to get to your episode on...

BOYATT: Oh, the hijacking. Well, that happened in '69. Where do you want to talk about it? Are we chronological or what?

Q: Let's talk about it now.

BOYATT: Well, I went home on home leave in 1969. I went home leave essentially to get divorced from my first wife, and I went a year ahead of when I should have gone, in order to make this happen. You know, there was no such thing as a no fault divorce in those days. Somebody had to be guilty of something, and you had to go back to your original jurisdiction, and it wasn't easy like it is now. So I asked Ambassador Popper if I could do that, and he said, sure. So I went back to Cincinnati, had the divorce, you know a month and a half later got on a plane at Dulles Airport, flew to Paris, Paris to Rome, Rome to Athens was the schedule, Athens, Tel Aviv, and I was going to get off at Athens and take the local down to Cyprus. Overnight, fine, got to Paris, got to Rome, got back on the plane

and we're flying between Rome and Athens when I suddenly saw a stewardess—this in a 707, run from the back of the plane all the way forward, and then come running back, as white as a sheet. And I thought, “Oh, God, we've got a mechanical problem.” And, I started looking around, and I looked down and we were over the Corinthian Canal.

Q: This is between the Piraeus(?) and...In Greece.

BOYATT: And by the time you're over the Corinthian Canal, you're in the landing pattern. We were still at 35,000 feet and I knew something was wrong. And about this time a voice came on the loud speaker, and said, in sort of half French, half English, “Attencion, Attencion. This plane has been taken over by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Put your hands on your heads, don't move, there are Israeli assassins aboard, we're going to a friendly country.” So, there we sat with our hands on our heads for an hour and a half, anyway. I could see Cyprus off to the left of the plane, and we were still quite high, so I knew we were headed to the Middle Eastern mainland. And as we came in over the mainland, the plane came down, and down, and down and by the time it came in over the mainland it looked like it was in a landing pattern of some kind. And just about the time I noticed that we had Star of David fighter planes, one on each wing that I could see. In fact, we had one in front of us and one behind us but I couldn't see them, and I thought, “Oh, shit, there is some big league Israeli aboard and the Israelis are going to shoot this thing down rather than let it fall into Arab hands.” So I had another moment of sheer terror. But nothing happened, except that we flew in a circle for a while, and I learned later... (tape interruption)

Q: You had a diamond, a Star of David, Israeli fighters...

BOYATT: I subsequently found out what happened was, that the plane had gone into a landing pattern over Lode Airport in Tel Aviv, and they were hurling insults at the Israelis, bad mouthing the Israelis. And that's when we got our fighter escort. But eventually the plane turned north, still over land, so I could see that we were going either to Iraq

or Syria, one or the other. It didn't make much sense to go to Lebanon in those days. Of course, that would have been the best outcome for us, but not likely, I guess, under the circumstances. So we went back up to altitude, and flew north. By this time several hours had passed, and we're all getting damn tired of keeping our hands on our heads, people had to go to the bathroom, and people were praying, and it was a mess. And they kept coming on and saying, “Attencion, attencion, this is PFLP flight number one, Israeli assassins, we're going to a friendly country, and we'll hear your just demands when we get on the ground.” And the plane started coming down, and we knew we were going to crash land, we didn't know where, and we were running out of fuel too, having flown for quite a while. The stewardesses came by, and collected everybody's shoes, their watch, pencils, rings, anything that keeps going at impact because when you hit, everything that's not tied down keeps going with the speed that the aircraft had when it impacted. This is a normal emergency procedure, so they took all this stuff and collected it in big plastic bags, and stuffed it in the johns. And we're going down, and we're going down, and the Palestinians come on, and they tell us that, “Attencion, attencion, you must evacuate this plane within 60 seconds because we're blowing it up 60 seconds after we get on the ground.” And, of course, I had another stab of fear because I figured, you know, these crazy Arabs are going to screw it up, and they're going to blow it up 60 seconds before we get on the ground, rather than after.

Anyway, they kept coming on and saying that, and we're going down, and everybody takes the crash position with heads and pillows against the seat in front. We (the travellers)put people on all of the emergency exits and the doors so that we could get them open, and get those chutes down as quickly as possible because what we knew was that we had a small amount of time before the plane exploded. Nobody knew what the amount of time was. So the plane landed in what looks like a desert, at the last minute a stone runway appeared, we rumbled to a halt. Then the operators popped the doors, and the chutes went down. I was near the left rear door. And the chute went down, so everybody started piling out, and I was near the end of the people that came out that way, and as I got to

the bottom of the slide, I waited for everyone else to get off, and then I sort of tried to herd them across this field. You know how it is when you're an FSO overseas, you take care of American citizens, it's one of the basic things that you do. So, I'm kind of urging this group of people across the field—we're in bare feet now, right? And the minute we got off the runway we ran into a field of prickle briars. You know those things with long spines, and, of course, people were unavoidably stepping on the damn things, and falling down, and getting back up, and keeping going. And we finally got away from the plane, and at this point I turned around and I could see this young guy shooting at the back of the plane with a pistol, and I figured he was trying to blow it up or do something bad—set it on fire, I didn't know. And about that time we looked at the plane, and under the wing—there were these two bodies folded up, and one woman standing over a man, and another woman on the ground. The 707 has two doors on either side over the wing, so you come out onto the wing and in order to get on the ground you've got to get off the wing, and some people were sort of sliding down it like it was a children's slide, and going in feet first. What you're supposed to do is go down on your belly and grab the trailing edge, of course, nobody told anybody that.

Anyway, two people had hurt themselves. It turned out one lady had broken her leg, and a guy had broken his ankle. So, everyone looked at everyone else, whose going to solve this problem? And there was this soldier standing there, and he looked at me, and I looked at him, somehow he knew I was an officer, he said, “Shit, Sir.” And I said, “Come on trooper.” So the two of us ran back across the field of prickle briars, in our bare feet, and we got under the wing and we made a fireman's seat for the one lady, a heavy lady, on the ground who had broken her leg which looked just like an L, it was a mess, and she's thrashing around, screaming, she's in shock, kind of fighting us, like a drowning person. We had a hell of a time with her, we finally got her into the seat. And the guy who had broken his ankle was conscious, and rational, and he sort of put his hand on somebody's shoulder, and his wife supported him on the other side, and the five of us came out and back across that field for the third time. As we got across the field there was a slit, a

shallow trench with some sandbags, and we all got behind that, and just about the time we got behind that, bam, the front third of the airplane went up in a puff of smoke, followed by a very loud bang.

And about this time some soldiers came racing across the field—we didn't know who the hell they were—with great big heavy machine guns, some kind of an assault, but a big heavy assault rifle, I guess. Of course, that was the next of several moments of danger. That was a moment of danger because we were afraid they were going to start blazing away at us, but they didn't. They rounded us up and put us in buses, and took us back to the airport.

Where were we? We find out that we were in Syria, in Damascus, it's 1969. It's two years after the Six Day War, we have no diplomatic relations, we have a plane full of Jews, it's on its way to Tel Aviv, its got American Jews, Canadian Jews, and Spanish Jews, you name it, we have it. So I pulled out my black passport, and I said, “I'm an American diplomatic officer, and this is an American flag carrier.”

Q: Which airline was it?

BOYATT: TWA. “We're here not of our own volition, and these people are under my protection.” And the officer at the airport said, “Well, everyone has to be interrogated.” And you know, I had visions, bad visions, so I said, “I have to be present during the interrogations.” So all that night into the next morning, I was present while they interrogated people, asking them who they were, what their religion was, and what their nationality was, what they had seen, what had happened. And each one told his or her story from a particular point of view. I was with one group of passengers, there was another group of passengers at a different spot, and the crew was yet in a third location. So finally they got tired of me, and tossed me in jail, and then later the next day the Italians, who represented us there, came around and got us all out. Then the question was, is everybody out? We took the position that all passengers go, or no passengers

go. And in the end what they did was, they kept all of the Israelis. So they made a cut by nationality, not by religion, or some other criterion. It was a nationality determination. You know, it was one of those tough decisions. Do you stay, or do you go? I decided we better get the hell out of there with what we could, and so did others, and we all piled onto a bus, went back out to the airport, and were flown out by the Italians. It was two days later.

A day later they released the Israeli women and children, and kept two Israeli males. And then they subsequently traded for a Syrian fighter pilot. So in the end nobody died.

Q: What role, at this point, did the PLO people play who were hijacking planes?

BOYATT: They were local heroes, but they were not as mean as they later became. I suppose at later PFLP hijackings, they killed any official Americans they could find.

Q: Were you the only Foreign Service officer?

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: Didn't you get an award for this?

BOYATT: Sure. I got an award for saving that lady's life, and for negotiating.

Q: How did that come about? I'm just looking at the handling of something like this.

BOYATT: Well, they flew us back to Athens, and I went into the embassy and said, “You know that plane that was hijacked? I was on it.”

Q: Did you have shoes by this time?

BOYATT: Yes, I did get my shoes back. The people who had stuff in the front end of the plane didn't get anything back, but those who were in the back...I got my shoes back, and my briefcase. I think I lost a camera, or maybe it was a watch. I lost something that had some value. And they said, “The political counselor wants to see you.” So I went to see

Arch Blood who was the political counselor, and he said, “Before you do another thing, sit down and write this up, and send it back to the Department.” So I said, “Yes, sir,” and I did. In the meantime, of course, NEA had become seized with this. Joe Sisco, the Assistant Secretary, had been orchestrating negotiations with the Italians, and they wanted a first hand report as soon as they could get it. They knew the plane was coming to Athens airport, so Arch Blood made sure that he got hold of me. And I reported it, and Sisco put me up for the award.

Q: Why don't we call it off at this point?

BOYATT: That's good, I'm tired.

Q: Today is October 18th, 1991. We're picking up 19 months after our last interview. Tom, we left you when you had been hijacked by the PLO, and now we're in 1970 to '71 where you went to Near East Asian and Southeast Asian Affairs as a special assistant to Joseph Sisco. Would you describe Joe Sisco's method of operation, and what you did? He is one of the interesting characters in the business.

BOYATT: All right, Stuart. First, let me correct you. It wasn't the PLO, it was the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. It was June of 1970 that I came back to the Department to be Joe Sisco's senior special assistant.

Joe Sisco is one of our original Foreign Service characters. I called him “Jolting(?) Joe from Cicero”, Cicero, Illinois. He had a very hard nose, tough talking, brusk, approach to the world, which made him very effective in the Washington policy jungle. He was the Assistant Secretary for Near East and Southern Asia, an area that included in those days Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, and Iran, as well as the other obvious areas. What I did for him was that I controlled the flow of information to him, all of the cables that he received, all the memoranda that he got came through me, and I decided what he should see, and

what he shouldn't see. And then I made sure that whatever follow-up was necessary on the basis of his instructions, was done.

It was a very interesting period in the evolution of American foreign policy because Henry Kissinger was the National Security Adviser. Kissinger was carving out his empire, and his place which eventually became a place of primacy in foreign affairs at the expense of Secretary Rogers. Whereas Kissinger was in effect managing Vietnam, was in effect managing detente, and was in effect managing the opening to China, the one area where the State Department won some influence for Secretary Rogers was in the Middle East. That was done by Sisco, and it was done by convincing the Egyptians and the Israelis that they ought to at least open a dialogue on the basis of UN Resolution 242. At that time we had one person in Cairo, the head of our Interests Section, Don Bergus. He had a relationship with Nasser, and Joe tabled this proposal...[phone]

Q: You were talking about dealing with the Egyptians.

BOYATT: We made a proposal that the dialogue should be started on the basis of 242, and we eventually heard back from the Israelis who said they would be interested in exploring that, and then days and weeks went by and we didn't hear anything from the Egyptians. Then early one morning—I got in early and went through the cables as part of my job, controlling the communications flow—at 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning I got called from S/S...

Q: S/S is Secretariat.

BOYATT: ...who said, “We've gotten a cable from Don Bergus in Cairo, and you better get up here.” So I ran up to the seventh floor and there was a NODIS cable for the Secretary and Sisco and it said, contrary to everyone's expectations, that Gamal Nasser accepted and agreed to the dialogue. This acceptance by Nasser was the beginning of the peace process. People had been talking about the peace process for the last 21 years, and

indeed it is a process. It began with these talks, it went through the Yom Kippur war, after which Kissinger was engaged in the talks.

Q: Yom Kippur was in '73.

BOYATT: ...'73, and Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy was in '73 and '74, and then it went through Camp David and the process that led up to that during the entire Carter administration, and so on. So I was very definitely present at the creation of the “peace process”.

Q: How much attention from your perspective, was William Rogers, the Secretary of State, paying to this? Or were things pretty much in Sisco's hands?

BOYATT: Things were in Sisco's hands until the two principals accepted the proposal. Then it instantly became a major matter, and it got Bill Rogers' attention. He had us all up to lunch the very day that the acceptance came through, and he called the President about it. The management of this process, until such time as Rogers left in '73 and Kissinger came on, was in Rogers' hands, and essentially managed by Sisco.

Q: Did you have the feeling in your position there, that the National Security Council under Kissinger was keeping an eye on you? And were you, you as an organization, having to keep them out of the process?

BOYATT: Yes, that was a continuing problem. Henry, of course, once it was successful, became interested, whereas he had been ignoring this before. We started having calls from Kissinger. The good news was, that the person who covered the Middle East for him was Hal Saunders, and he's a very low-key, sensible person who was easy to work with at the working level. The fact is that the action stayed in the State Department.

Q: Did you feel any of the pressure, and how was Sisco, and say the organization, reacting to the Israeli lobby in the United States during that time? Were they geared up to try to either stop the process or further it, or...

BOYATT: We spent a lot of time stroking that lobby. They essentially supported the process.

Q: So you weren't at odds with them?

BOYATT: We weren't in a conflictive situation, but Joe and the others directly involved, really went out of their way to consult with them, and to keep them on board.

Q: Again from your perspective, how did you find our State Department desk officers dealing with the various Arab countries? Were they sort of on board, or was there a Sisco operation, and a foot dragging?

BOYATT: Oh, no, no. On the contrary; they were all on board. And those, what you call desk officers in those days were country directors, they were senior. It was Mike Sterner, who went on to become an ambassador; Dick Murphy who went on to become an ambassador and an Assistant Secretary; Talcott Seelye also went on to become an ambassador; and “Stack Stackhouse” who could have had an embassy but retired. Roy Atherton was the Deputy Assistant Secretary in charge, and that was essentially the team.

Q: But it was a focus group. I mean somebody didn't have to control it.

BOYATT: No, that was the Sisco team and there was no question about that.

Q: Tom, I don't know maybe we better skip something, but if not should we go to Cyprus?

BOYATT: I think we ought to go to AFSA.

Q: You were later the President of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA).

BOYATT: That is correct. It is not too much to say that we changed the whole personnel system. We put in place employee-management relations and grievance systems the dissent banned, and transparency and equity in promotions and assignments. In a sense we gave “power to the people” and the Foreign Service personnel system has never been the same since. It was my perception of the abusive use of power by Ambassador Patricia Harris in Luxembourg that brought me into AFSA in 1966-67. I suddenly realized that there were no checks and balances; that there was no due process in the Foreign Service system. This abuse of power in Luxembourg fell more heavily on the DCM—I was young and junior and it didn't matter so much—who was hounded out of the Service because of his poor efficiency rating from the Ambassador. From that moment on, I was a sword carrier.

It was in the winter of 1966-67 that a group of younger officers began to talk about the Service. This group also came to be known as the “Young Turks”, and consisted of Charlie Bray, who was then in a University training program, Lannon Walker, who was assigned to a Washington office, myself who was in Greek language training and some others. We first began meeting and talking about the future of the Foreign Service and the diplomatic profession.

Q: You returned to Washington and became the Vice President of AFSA. How was the organization?

BOYATT: It had been traditionally a professional organization which would sponsor luncheon meetings with speakers, published a high-toned and professional journal. The Presidents of AFSA were elected, but only very senior Foreign Service officers would actually run—people like Phil Habib or Alexis Johnson. It was these very senior FSOs who ran the organization. As I mentioned before, I was part of the “Young Turk” movement. There were a number of Foreign Service officers who didn't like the direction the Foreign Service was taking. We decided that the most effective way for us to get our message across and to bring about reforms in the personnel system would be to take AFSA over.

That was to be our political base to bring pressure on top management of the Department to make such changes as we deemed necessary.

Our concerns included the appropriation of the foreign policy function by other organizations and the administration of the Foreign Service which increasingly was being administrated by people who were essentially Washington domestic service oriented and who had never been overseas and didn't therefore know what the problems were abroad. Consequently, these administrations made a series of decisions which were inimicable to the interests of Foreign Service people. In the process of assessing the situation and deciding what to do to bring about change, the “Young Turks” consciously decided to take AFSA over. We put together a slate with Lannon Walker as President. He won, based on our appeal to the lower ranked and middle-grade officers. We took the position that we should take our destiny into our own hands and we should be much more active. That is why they called us “Young Turks”.

Lannon won the first time and then was replaced by Charlie Bray, who was also part of the “Young Turk” group. In 1971, Charlie was replaced by Bill Harrop; I ran on that slate for Vice President. By that time, the movement to white collar unions in the federal sector, which had been gaining momentum for years, had won official recognition. The President promulgated by Executive Order a requirement for representational elections in all federal agencies if the employees of that agency wanted an election. They could indicate that desire by obtaining what is called a “Showing of Interest”, which required that a certain percentage of the employees show an affirmative interest in an election, which would then require the agency to hold such election. Groups who wished to be the exclusive representatives of the employees of that agency would then present themselves.

In the Department, there was an AFL affiliate—the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)—which had already organized several government departments and which was casting greedy eyes on State. I and other “Young Turks” took the position that if we would contest the elections and win them, then we would have even more power

because we would then have won official recognition and the Department would have to deal with us on personnel policies and administrative matters. Therefore it was very much in our interest to move AFSA beyond a professional association to a white collar union. There was a certain amount of negative feeling among the old guard, who felt that this was an unacceptable proposal. But in 1971, we ran on that plank. Harrop, Hank Cohen, Tex Harris, myself and others went to the State employees with a promise that if elected we would then try to organize a white collar union and win the right to represent State employees with management. We won the AFSA Board elections.

Q: Why was there resistance from the old guard?

BOYATT: The old guard didn't even like the word “union”. They didn't like the idea of a group of mid-career and junior FSOs getting together to negotiate with the Director General as equals; that was more than they could philosophically accept. It was a generational gap and in some respect a “rank” issue, although we had a lot of people at the senior levels who supported us. In any case, as I said, we won the Board election, then got the 25% support for a “Showing of Interest” by petition which forced State, USIA and AID to hold elections. AFGE contested the election and we beat their socks off—something like 10-12:1 We fought the election on the basis of Foreign Service needs and requirements and AFGE knew little about that. AFGE was a Civil Service union; they understood about the Civil Service and we suggested that the Department's Civil Service employees elect their own representatives. AFGE protested the election through legal avenues, but eventually they were turned down and AFSA was certified as the bargaining agent for the three foreign affairs agencies. We organized ourselves by establishing committees which dealt with administrative and personnel matters of all three agencies.

We negotiated and obtained office space in the Department; we received access to communications; and began to take positions on the various personnel issues as they arose.

Q: How did AFSA take those positions? Was it by the vote of the Board?

BOYATT: We had a Board and each member of the Board chaired a committee. We had one committee that was called the “Members' Interest Committee” which still exists today. In fact most of the structure that we put into place still exists today, twenty years later. The Committees are still in place; the way AFSA communicates is still the same—in some ways it is really incredible how long the structure has lasted.

Q: Where did you get your model from?

BOYATT: It came from within us. We had a very clear idea of what we wanted to accomplish. We had a reasonably clear idea of how to do it. The way the Executive Order was written forced the Department to consult and negotiate with AFSA before any law or regulation on personnel or administrative matters could be changed. The Department, if it tried to exclude us, we brought unfair labor practices lawsuits. Invariably, the Board would have to tell the Department that it could not proceed with this or that without negotiating; it was not business as usual. We had a big “stick”—the Department could not make any change in its personnel or administrative practices without our agreement.

Very quickly we got into a horse-trading situation. We knew we wanted to de-bureaucratize travel and shipment of household effects and those kinds of administrative operations; we knew we wanted a say in personnel policies and procedures; we knew we wanted legislation which would guarantee a grievance procedure. Those goals led us to set up three committees, each of which would handle one of those matters. Those committees engaged the Department's management arm in dialogue and negotiations on each of those issues. We had some very bloody times at the beginning.

Q: What were the specific sticking points?

BOYATT: The first was that the Department could not bring itself to believe that it had to deal with us as an equal. For the first few months after union verification, it tried to proceed

as if it were “business as usual”. We brought unfair labor practice suits and kept winning them; the Department kept getting over-ruled. We also leaked to the press stories about State's poor management and the low morale in the Foreign Service. We brought pressure on management in any way we could. Eventually, the Department decided that since it couldn't beat us, it better join us. The Department started to negotiate in good faith.

Foreign Service people had assumed that the Washington administrative staffs that made the rules were Foreign Service employees and would therefore protect the interest of the Service staff. It wasn't true. In the first place, a lot of the Washington staff was not Foreign Service—they were Civil Service types regardless of their designations—who didn't know a lot about the Foreign Service and were not rule-making for the benefit of the Foreign Service; they were making the rules in terms of saving money or efficient personnel administration or whatever. That is why we had such strong public support.

Q: How about the more senior Foreign Service officials like the Director General or the head of Personnel or the Assistant Secretary for Administration?

BOYATT: The Director Generals we dealt with were Foreign Service officers; the administrative people not necessarily. In any case, their responsibilities were institutional; ours were human. From the point of view of the institution, they wanted to save as much money as possible; there has been a budget squeeze on the Department since Genesis or certainly since I had been in the Service. If that is what drives management, then the regulations must be written and interpreted in such a way that the troops don't get a break. That is what was consistently occurring. We turned all of that around.

Q: Did the Secretary get involved in these issues at all?

BOYATT: I don't think that Secretary Rogers understood what was happening. I don't think he really cared much. He put all responsibilities on Bill Macomber, the Deputy Under Secretary for Management. So we dealt with him. Kissinger became Secretary in the Summer of 1973 by which time I had become President of the Association replacing

Bill Harrop. I had called Larry Eagleburger earlier at the White House and told him that I was the President of AFSA and that I would like to meet with Kissinger before he became Secretary. Such a meeting could lay the groundwork for our future relationships. Larry agreed and set up the meeting. Hank Cohen, Tex Harris and I went to Kissinger's White House office. We told him what our concerns were; we wanted a more equitable administration of the Foreign Service—he supported that idea. We said also that we wanted a personnel system which would promote the best people on a fair basis—he agreed with that. We told him that we also felt very strongly about politically appointed Ambassadors and that I as the President of AFSA, pursuant to a vote of the Board, would testify against those political appointees whom we felt were incompetent or unequal to the task. After that small speech, there was a terrible pause and then Kissinger said: “You will understand that from time to time there will be certain political exigencies which will require that I will appoint an Ambassador whom I might otherwise not prefer to have in such a job.” I said that he in turn would have to understand that there will be occasions when the administration will nominate a political personage who will be so inept and so unqualified that I, as the elected President of AFSA, will be required to go to the Senate to testify against the nominee. I told him that I intended to do that as fiercely as I could. There was another pregnant pause. Then Kissinger said: “You must remember that I can always send you to Chad. Ha. Ha. Ha!!” It was very amusing.

We had a channel to Kissinger through Eagleburger, which we used from time to time, but essentially Henry understood the politics of the situation. He knew that I had been elected President of AFSA by people in the Foreign Service and that there wasn't anything he could do about it. He couldn't take that job from me and he understood that instantly. Instantly, he understood that there was a power center that he didn't control and that meant that he would have to get along with it. So, by and large, he courted us. I must have had a half a dozen meetings with Kissinger which included the Under Secretary for Management, one of my lieutenants and the Director General, who was the note-taker. I was a Foreign Service Officer, Class 3, which was a middle-grade officer, perhaps

the equivalent of a colonel. Kissinger treated me more or less as an equal with a lot more respect than he showed to officers who were considerably senior to me in the bureaucracy. He did it because he understood the political realities; he knew that I could go to a Congressional Committee on any day and say: “Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the 11,000 employees of the Foreign Service whom I represent, our views are.....” So Kissinger made the right choice; it was better to switch than fight.

Q: Did you have any fights over Ambassadorial appointments?

BOYATT: Yes, indeed. The first time the Association testified against an Ambassador was about a man by the name of Firestone who was nominated to be our Ambassador to Belgium. There was no reason for the nomination except that he had given a lot of money to the Republican Party. He had also given a lot of money to the Democrats as well, particularly to Senator Cranston. This Firestone, a member of the famous family, lived in California. When the hearing was held, Bill Harrop and I went to the room to give our testimony against the nominee. Firestone walked in, flanked by Senator Cranston and some senior Republican Senator. They sat at the witness table, with the two Senators taking turns raving about Firestone. Then Chairman Sparkman asked the nominee a few questions. Firestone had clearly been programmed to say: “Mr. Chairman (or Senator), I am new at this; I am still studying and learning; if I may, I will take the question and respond in writing at a later date.” That was his standard answer to every question asked. Eventually, Sparkman, who was getting a little frustrated, said: “Mr. Ambassador-designate, you understand that there are two other American Ambassadors in Brussels—the Ambassador to the OECD and our Ambassador to NATO. How would you characterize the relationship you will have with them?” Firestone replied: “Mr. Chairman, I am still studying about this job. I will take the question and will answer you later.” Sparkman could not believe what he was hearing. He said: “Mr. Firestone, would you say that your relationships with those two other American Ambassadors might be characterized as relationships of cooperation and cordiality?” Mr. Firestone said: “Mr. Chairman, I am not prepared to answer that question because I am still studying the issue. If you will allow

me to take the question, I will respond to it in writing later." It was unbelievable! Half of the people in the room were falling off their chairs and the others were trying to look elsewhere. It was incredible. We gave our serious testimony against Firestone, but he was confirmed unanimously by the Committee and became an Ambassador.

But we persevered and eventually later were able to defeat two very egregious appointments in the final days of the Nixon administration.

Q: Did the AFSA involvement add some sensitivity to the nominating process?

BOYATT: It did. You know how it is around this town. You must have respect and we got a little respect because we stopped a couple of nominations. They didn't clear the nominations, but if AFSA ever said that it would object to a particular nomination, it forced the administration to consider further.

The early 1970s was a very creative era. We set up the structure of the employee-management relations which exist to this day; we wrote the grievance legislation which was incorporated into the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and we wrote the employee-management system which was also incorporated into the 1980 Act.

Q: One of the charges made against AFSA in those days was that it represented middle grade political officers who were primarily interested in their own promotions.

BOYATT: That we represented middle grade officers was certainly correct. It is a fact that most Foreign Service officers are middle grade. The number of junior and senior officers were limited. Those statistics dictate that the majority of officers are middle grade. Secondly, we drew our support from three sources: a) secretaries, b) communicators (both these groups cared about the bread and butter issues that were pushing and we were the only Foreign Service officer group who had ever taken up issues of interest to staff people like secretaries and communicators); and c) political/economic officers. They supported us because we were opposed to the "cone" system; we opposed that system

for the same reasons that have caused the Department to change it recently—too hard to predict requirements in general. You might be able to predict requirements at the next grade level—maybe, but you couldn't predict the needs over three or four grades over four or five years. The arbitrariness of the system forced a competition for positions since you could only promote officers if there were openings at the next highest level. Therefore the control of the system fell to those who controlled the grade level allocation for each position. It was an absurd situation in the course of which the promotion system was put in the hands of the “bean counters”.

So there was some truth to the allegation you mentioned. In any political organization, you have to build a coalition or stand for a number of ideas that will be supported by a majority if you hope to continue in power. Generally, the positions we took were supported by those three interest groups which made us very strong—virtually unbeatable.

Q: We are discussing a period when youth was “in”—a junior officer received more attention than he or she would later. What were your relationships with that group?

BOYATT: They were good. We had all been pampered junior officers. The advent of John Kennedy put a whole new emphasis on youth. Suddenly, instead of kicking FSO 6, 7 and 8s around like cannon fodder, as had been tradition until the early '60s, junior officers were “in”. The leadership of AFSA in the early '70s had all been junior officers in the early '60s. We had all been active in the Junior Foreign Service Officer Committee (JFSOC). It was the first generation that was not tainted with “original sin”. As we moved into the middle grades we took over AFSA, but there was a silent, symbiotic understanding between JFSOC and AFSA that the leadership of the group of Junior officers would probably become the leaders of AFSA in 10-15 years later.

Q: The period we are covering was the period of the height of the Vietnam war and many junior officers were becoming restless with US policies. Did AFSA get involved?

BOYATT: We were involved in protecting the junior officers. I may be one of the few people who didn't have strong views about Vietnam. I had been in Greek language training in the middle '60s and then went off to Cyprus. I had other things to worry about and therefore never became deeply concerned with Vietnam. AFSA as an organization became involved in stopping the Department from savaging these anti-Vietnam employees. It wasn't very difficult because clearly the law was on their side.

Q: Wasn't there a time when a petition against our Cambodian policy signed by a good number of junior officers caused Nixon to order that they be fired?

BOYATT: That did occur, but the order could never have been carried out. AFSA helped to prevent anything from happening to these officers, but in any case, we are a government of laws and there wasn't any way that these officers could be punished for signing that petition. Nixon discovered the truth three years later. In any case, the administration had more serious “enemies” than a group of junior Foreign Service officers.

Q: Did you have any difficulties with the tension between what AFSA was trying to do and the concept of a disciplined Foreign Service whose employees would serve wherever needed?

BOYATT: That question raises one of the eternal conflicts. We tried to walk that very thin line; a lot of us walked that razor's edge in our personal lives, making a real separation between what we did in AFSA in terms of relating to the Department's managers and administrators and what we did on the foreign policy side. We had to separate sharply those two distinct aspects of our lives. The first required us to stand up for our rights and the second requiring essentially a disciplined service, although I must say that we did use the “dissent” channel, the Open Forum and the grievance system to dissent from established or developing foreign policy without getting totally destroyed. We tried to square that circle. How successful we were is moot, but one thing is certain: until we came along, the pendulum had swung too far over to conformity. None ever spoke out on

anything. It may perhaps at some point have swung too far in the other direction; I don't know. I was probably out of it before that stage was reached.

The test of all we accomplished is the test of time. The grievance system still exists; the Open Forum still exists; the “dissent” channel still exists; the employee-management system still exists. And it has been twenty-one years!

Q: Thank you.

Today is the 31st of July, 1992. This is a continuing series of interviews with Tom Boyatt. These have been going on so far I'm beginning to be concerned about senility on your or my part, but anyway.

Tom, what we've arranged to do, we're not going to cover your time on the Cyprus desk because that will be covered in a separate presentation. In 1975 you'd finished the Senior Seminar, along with yours truly, and went to Chile as DCM where you served from '75 to '78. Given the fact that you were sort of persona non grata in the Kissinger scheme of things when he was Secretary of State, how did you get that job?

BOYATT: Well, I got the job, and this will be covered when I speak about my time on the Cyprus desk. Cyprus was one of the cases which the two special intelligence committees, the House and the Senate committees which were established in '74-'75, decided to concentrate on. They decided to focus on Cambodia, Chile, and Cyprus. And in the context of their hearings on Cyprus there was a long involved struggle to get me to testify. I was in the middle between Kissinger who didn't want me to testify, because I was right about Cyprus and he was wrong, and the committee who did want me to testify. The whole thing had constitutional overtones. The long and short of it was, that at the end of that whole Cyprus period, and Senior Seminar period, which terminated in the spring of '75 with this Congressional problem, Larry Eagleburger wanted to save my career, and Henry Kissinger wanted me out of town. So the perfect solution was for me to go to Chile, which is a hell of a long way from Washington, which made Kissinger happy. It's a great

assignment, a great spot to be DCM. It's a country where, as you know, I'd served before, I speak Spanish with a Chilean accent. I knew everybody in the country because I'd met them all in the '59-'62 period when they were more junior. I had known Allende. He, of course, was dead by '75. I had known Frei when he was a Senator from the north, and I had known Pinochet when he was a major and lieutenant colonel in the north where I was. So I really was the perfect person to send into that job, and, of course, when the Chileans heard that I was coming, they all said, “Ah-ha, nuestro gringo,” these Americans they're so smart, they punched up the computer for the perfect guy for this job, and out popped Boyatt. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. I went down there because Henry wanted me out of town. But, anyway, I really was the right guy, in the right place, at the right time.

Q: What about the ambassador? What was his role, and who was the ambassador?

BOYATT: The ambassador was David Popper, an excellent professional, as you know. His position was a very difficult one because(and this difficulty continued into the Carter administration)but the difficulty in '75-'76 was that we had a Henry Kissinger in Washington...well, let me put it to you this way, one of the cables from the embassy wherein we suggested very sort of suavely that to some degree our foreign policy should be linked to the human rights issues and the way the Chileans treated their own people. Kissinger scribbled across the cable, “Tell Popper to knock off the God damn social science lectures.” Someone showed me the cable with his note on it. We were in between the Democratic Congress, and the human rights advocates in our own society, and, let's face it, the political left wing who were horrified that Pinochet had overthrown Allende even though Pinochet had the support of 75 percent of the people. That didn't matter.

Q: Because some of these things will be read into the 21st century, these transcripts, Allende was a tremendous darling of the left, as well as the hard core left.

BOYATT: Yes. It was hard to understand because his government was a disaster, and his own people turned on him including the so-called lower classes in Chile. I mean all of those demonstrations of women beating pots and pans, those weren't upper class people from the Barrio Alto, from the upper class neighborhoods. Those were just people people. And what had happened was that he tried to impose a Marxist-socialist economic regime on Chile, and it just failed. It was a terrible disaster, it didn't work. In this rich country people couldn't get food, they couldn't get toilet paper, and by the way, Stuart, the toilet paper index never fails. Once people can't get toilet paper, you can be sure they're going to revolt. That's happened every place I've been, and it happened in Chile.

Allende's overthrow was a popular movement, it wasn't an army coup. The army tossed him out of the presidential palace, and put enough pressure on so he blew his own head off. The army defeated his group of mercenaries from Cuba and elsewhere, the so-called GAP, the Grupo de amigos del Presidente, which was a kind of second army. But essentially this thing had widespread popular support in Chile. From the Democratic party and left in the United States, and the world, nobody wanted to hear that, although it was the truth.

On the other hand, the Pinochet regime was committing human rights violations, and we were reporting these, and suggesting to some degree we ought to try to do something about it. And Kissinger didn't want to hear that. So we had sort of a realpolitik from the executive branch, and human rights driven pressures from the legislative branch, and the media, and so on. And we were in the middle. That was '75 and '76.

Q: How were you being used? I mean, you had had this experience before in Chile, and you'd met all the players, but how did Popper use you?

BOYATT: First of all, I was his deputy in the full sense of the word. I cleared off on all of the substantive cables before they went to him, and because I knew Chile, and Chileans, he was interested in my views. Didn't always agree with them, but he certainly wanted

them into the pot. I played a strong role on the substantive side, and with the admin counselor saw to things on the administrative side.

Q: How were we viewing, at that time, the changes in the economy? Because if I recall, Pinochet had his University of Chicago boys who all had been educated in hard core, Chicago style, economics.

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: ...which was essentially what, a very free market.

BOYATT: Yes, it's a very important point. Typically when a Latin American military group takes power, they try to militarize the economy, and make it a government bureaucracy responsive to them. They're statists generally. But in this case Pinochet came in and made a strategic decision early on, in 1974, that he was going to turn economic policy over to the civilians, and to the free market civilians. For one reason or another, I think primarily because he'd seen the success of it in the United States, he was emotionally, intellectually, and operationally, in support of the free market model. So beginning in '74 the country changed overnight from the sort of extreme Marxism of Allende, and the statism of the Christian Democrats, to the free market model which was applauded by the conservatives. And the amazing thing was, the free market model worked. Chile began to recover dramatically in the economic sphere.

Just to put a final point to that story. Chile is today the strongest country in Latin America, perhaps the strongest country in the Third World outside of Asia. It is the Singapore and the Taiwan or Latin America. It has a low inflation rate, an unemployment rate that is lower than ours, a stable economy that's growing at about 5 or 6 percent a year. It's in extremely good shape. A positive balance of payments, budget surplus, and they're beginning to be very successful in spreading the wealth downward on the social scale; it's a hell of a

success story on the economic side. And, of course, we knew that in the '70s too, and we reported that, but nobody wanted to hear that either.

Q: How did you feel? Let's take before Carter, your time there was divided into two parts. One, a hard nosed Henry Kissinger type who really was very happy to get Allende out. And then you moved to the Carter period, which was quite different. During period A, the Kissinger time, what was the attitude? You, the ambassador, and also the staff—you're looking at this situation, and on one side you're concerned about human rights—what was the mood at the embassy?

BOYATT: Well, the Congress was cutting off Chilean assistance in spite of the executive...stopped economic aid, stopped military aid, Peace Corps out, voting against Chilean loans in the World Bank and Inter-American Bank. That was mostly legislative driven. On the other hand, Kissinger clearly supported the regime, and other elements in the United States supported the regime because they had thrown the communist out—in effect the communist, the Marxists. Others in the United States supported the regime because it was pro-free market, and pro-business.

The mood in the embassy was that our job was just simply to report it accurately back to Washington as best we could, and that's what we tried to do. So we told them what was true. We told them that the economic policy was working, on the good side. We told them about the human rights violations on the negative side. And we told them about Pinochet's popularity. I would say that the mood in the embassy was very positive. We thought we were doing good work, and in fact we were.

Q: What about the media? Did you have American press coming down there and sort of kicking at you?

BOYATT: Sure. Absolutely.

Q: Was this the period they were beginning to talk about the movie “Missing”. You might explain what that was about, and how that affected you.

BOYATT: Well, “Missing” is about allegations that the US embassy colluded in the arrest and murder, of an American kid and his friend, who were down there trying to make Allende's government successful. The facts are otherwise. The facts are that these people were down there trying to help Allende, and they were picked up early in the Pinochet activity and shot. But there was no embassy collusion, we were not involved in it, and there was nothing we could have done to stop it. By the time we found out about it, it had already happened. But, yes, the US press was totally anti-Pinochet, and they came down there, and often we would have to fight to get them into the country. And then they would go out as journalists...they run as a pack. No American journalist, or European for that matter, was going to come down there and write something positive about Chile. And none ever did. Which meant that they had nothing to say about Pinochet's popularity, denied it, had nothing to say about the economic progress. They only came down and reported about human rights, and that's fine. But a professional Foreign Service person can't do that. Foreign Service people have to write about it all, and write about it as accurately as they can.

Incidentally, you asked me about what was my position. My position with the ambassador was delicate, not because we weren't then, and aren't now, good friends. But because Pinochet knew me personally, and he would often send an invitation over to the embassy, or have one of his aides call up. and invite me to a private lunch, which put me in a hell of an awkward situation because I'm the number two, I'm not the ambassador. So invariably I would go in to David Popper, and I would say, “Mr. Ambassador, President Pinochet has invited me to lunch, but I will understand perfectly if you want me to decline the invitation.” And invariably he would say, “Yes, dammit, decline. If he wants to invite somebody to lunch it ought to be me. I'm the President's representative here.” And I would say, “Yes, I quite agree.” And I'd go back to my office, and instead of immediately turning down

the invitation, I'd wait because I knew that within a half an hour, or an hour, David would change his mind. And every time he did, he'd change his mind and he'd come in and say, “Well, this is a unique opportunity, and we really can't afford for you not to go and I want you to make the following points.” So that's how that worked out, just as an aside.

Q: Let's talk about your impression of Pinochet, and your dealings with him at that time, because there are several Pinochets. I mean toward the end Pinochet turned sort of rancid, I guess. But anyway, this is at the height of his power, wasn't it?

BOYATT: Yes, it was at the height of his power. The height of his power lasted a long time though, Stuart. You have to understand that. My impressions of Pinochet? My first impression of Pinochet is that he is a very good politician. He understands the dynamics of power. My second impression of him is, that he made a huge right decision, and that was to turn the economy over to the free market model. Chile is today about where Spain, and Greece, and Portugal, are. And it's only because of one man's decision, his. He turned the whole economy around, and it was so successful that today the Christian Democrats, and a good part of the socialists, have as their economic plank that they will follow the free market model of the economy. And in fact, the Christian Democrats, who have been in almost four years now—the fourth year is next year—did not change his economic policies at all. Indeed, they intensified them.

On the other hand, he permitted, I think more like Henry II, serious human rights violations. His intelligence people did a lot of the things that they are accused of doing, and that cannot be forgiven. Look, the proof of this pudding, Stuart, is that in 1988 or '89, whenever they had the referendum, it was a free election which was certified by the international community who was there in droves; wherein the Chilean people could have chosen Pinochet versus all other political parties after 15 years in power. He still got 43.5 percent of the votes. More than any other single political party. That would not have happened if the Chilean people had turned their backs on him. He would have gotten, like some of these Africans did, 5 percent or 3 percent. But he didn't. Right up until the very end he had

strong support, and he had strong support because he saved the country from Allende, and because he put it on the right course economically, and the people knew that. And even today, if he were to run today, he'd get one-third of the damn votes.

And Stuart, one other thing, tell me one other dictator who has peacefully, and in an organized way, turned over power to a democratically elected successor. Tell me one.

Q: I can't think of any.

BOYATT: I can't think of any either, and he did that too. He didn't have to do that. With 43 percent of the popular vote, and the army with him, he could have stayed in a dictatorial mode, but he didn't. And those are the facts. Some things on the negative side of the balance sheet, and a lot of things on the positive side.

Q: When you were sitting down having these lunches, you had your points to make. What was his view of American process, our interests?

BOYATT: He couldn't understand why the United States was opposed to him, because he saw himself as the man who had saved Chile from communism. Therefore, the United States should support him on those grounds alone. And the man who was in the process of turning Chile into a free market economic miracle. So we should support him on those grounds. And he simply didn't understand why elements in the United States were against him. For my part I tried to convince him to form a legitimate political party, and throw the process open. And that was consistent with US policy, I mean I wasn't free lancing. Our policy was to restore democracy, and this was the way we saw to get that done. If he'd done that, Stuart, in '76, or '77, or '78, and had the election, he'd have won the damn thing. But he didn't, and he kept putting it off, and putting it off, and when he finally had the election 10-12 years later, he lost.

Q: Here Chile had been a real democracy, more than really any other place in Latin America, until then a very well disciplined but neutral military force. Allende kicked over

the bee hive. But why did the military respond with such fervor, rather than showing more discipline, rather than going through this really very bad human rights problems? What was our analysis at that time?

BOYATT: Well, the Chilean people, in the majority, wanted the army to intervene. And you had a situation in which women were throwing handfuls of corn in front of anybody in a uniform in the streets of Santiago. That means in Spanish, you're chicken, chickens eat corn.

Q: This was before...

BOYATT: ...before the overthrow of Allende. There was a lot of public pressure to do it. There was the belief that they were doing the right thing in terms of the western alliance, heroically simplified, broadly defined. There was also the fact that Allende was building an alternate armed force in the form of the GAP, the Grupo de Amigos del Presidente. There were Cuban hoods there, and Allende was bringing in arms clandestinely to arm them. In other words, he was creating a parallel army, but there was no way the Chilean army was going to accept that. When Allende did that, he really signed his death warrant. And when the army took over, their position was that they were going to eliminate this threat, and they did.

But at the end of the day, Stuart, there weren't all that many people killed, some thousands, a lot less bloody than Yugoslavia today, for instance. It wasn't as bad as it was painted in the press up here. But, you know, they had what they saw as provocation, and they took it upon themselves to clean it out, and every left winger with a weapon was shot.

Q: Then Carter gets elected.

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: How did the embassy respond?

BOYATT: It was incredible. Overnight we went from being soft, liberal-hearted, pinkos, to being the right wing, running dogs of Kissingerian realpolitik. It was crazy. All the criticism we had gotten from the right before the election in the United States, we then got from the people who came in with Carter who saw us as the handmaidens of a policy of subservience and clandestine support for Pinochet. It was really weird. It wasn't weird, it was perfectly understandable...that's the way...

Q: ...the way after Carter and Reagan came in...

BOYATT: Yes, then you went back the other way.

Q: What happened?

BOYATT: What happened was that after Carter the executive branch joined the legislative branch in terminating all elements of our relationship with Chile. I mean, A.I.D. was totally closed down and they went home. The military group was reduced dramatically. Then we started voting against Chile. There were things that we were allowed to do, and not allowed to do, in terms of attendance at meetings and invitations, because it might show support for the regime. And little by little the relations between the two countries got worse and worse. It was perfectly hypocritical on the part of Carter, et al, because they were maintaining perfectly normal relations with every despot in the Middle East and Africa, and Asia, all of whom were at least as bad as Pinochet. But Chile was sort of offered up as the sacrifice, the sacrificial lamb.

Q: This often happens. I mean there's one country where we have focus, and not just our focus, it's a world focus too. Isn't that awful where comparable things have happened? But this is the one that really did capture the imagination. Was David Popper still there?

BOYATT: David was there for part of that time, and then he came back to Washington and there was a long gap during which I was charg#, I think almost a year, ten months anyway. And then George Landau came.

Q: Was the reporting going on?

BOYATT: The reporting didn't change. We continued to report the truth as we saw it. What happened was, different people seized on different parts of that reporting in Washington to justify their policies, and of course, we tried to carry out the policies, whatever the hell they were, as best we could. And we tried to keep the lines open with the Pinochet regime but it was getting harder and harder because relationships were deteriorating rapidly.

Q: As we were taking these moves, were they slamming doors in our faces?

BOYATT: Of course, you bet. In fact I don't think Pinochet saw Popper the last year that he was there. I may be wrong about that, but that's the thrust of it.

Q: How did you find the CIA...the CIA had been accused of being the instigator of the coup.

BOYATT: I don't think that's true either, Stuart. Let me tell you what I think the truth there is. I think the CIA had a candidate, and was involved in this, but it was much earlier, and whoever their candidate was, and whatever their operation was, it failed. And then when Pinochet et al moved, that was not a CIA driven thing. That was internally driven within the Chilean army.

Q: Did the CIA have any so-called special relationship as far as information you were getting? I mean, were you able to use them as a channel, or were they in the same state as everyone else?

BOYATT: They had a liaison relationship with the Chilean intelligence services, and we cooperated on anti-narcotics matters. But, no, they didn't. They did not have the access we had, not even close.

Q: Sometimes in similar situations you have the CIA getting very close...

BOYATT: This was not one of those. I'm not sure that they had a relationship beyond the head of DINA, and the Minister of Interior. I'm the one who knew the Minister of Defense, and the president, and so on, and I'd known them since they were captains and majors.

Q: What about Letelier? Did the assassination take place while you were there?

BOYATT: Yes, and so did our successful solution of the mystery take place while I was there.

Q: Could you explain what that was, and how that affected?

BOYATT: Letelier was here in Washington working for one of the left wing institutes...

Q: He had been Allende's ambassador?

BOYATT: He had been Allende's ambassador in Washington, and he had also been Minister of Defense at the time of the coup. He was expelled from the country, not killed, by the Chilean army after the coup, and he was obviously carrying on activities in opposition to the regime. And the head of DINA, Contreras, mounted an operation to assassinate him, which was successful.

Q: He was blown up right in front...

BOYATT: ...right in front of Sheraton Circle, almost in front of the Chilean embassy. And they involved an ex-patriot American in that activity, some suspected they had done it from the beginning, and the FBI got on it in a big way with the embassy supporting them.

Obviously we can't have every Third World intelligence chief in the world thinking he can go around assassinating his opponents in Washington. On their part, it was an act of incredible stupidity and arrogance. You know, how dare they? And on our part, we rolled it up. And do you know how we broke the case? As a consular officer you'll be interested. There were two army officers who came to Washington as part of this, they played some role and they came on official passports. We keep records of official passports. We had their pictures, and we had their cover names, and we went to the Chilean Foreign Ministry, and said, “Did you ever ask for official, or diplomatic, passports for A, B, and C?” And we were using their real names, not their cover names, and they said, “No, we did not.” Anyway, we got the pictures, and we matched the pictures, and proved to the Foreign Ministry which was not witting that in fact they had given official passports to these two army officers who traveled to the US under aliases. And from there it rolled up. The Chancellor, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, resigned in quiet protest. The ambassador in Washington, Jorge Canas, resigned, because they had taken the position that, “We are not involved, and none of this is true.” And we proved to them that part of it was true, and they decided, “Well, maybe the rest of it is true,” and they didn't want to be involved with it, so they resigned.

And then we got a hold of one of these guys, and he talked, and then we got a hold of others and they talked, and we eventually rolled the whole thing up.

Q: Did this have any effect on relations, I mean from day one I think the assumption was, that of course the Chilean government was behind this thing, but as it was proved, how did this affect relations?

BOYATT: Well, it didn't help things, but of course, the link between Contreras and Pinochet was denied. Just as the links between our intelligence people, and our President are denied. Whether those links existed or not, we'll never know. We're trying to extradite Contreras right now. I hear he has cancer, and I don't think we're going to succeed.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover on Chile?

BOYATT: That was a wonderful assignment, it's a wonderful country, and they've just done a terrific job. I've had a lot to do with Chile in the last 10 years that I've been in the private sector, and it's just marvelous, Stuart, the way that country is developing. It is a textbook case, and of course now, the rest of Latin America is emulating the Chilean example. There are Chilean consultants, and former ministers, all over Latin America; advising the Mexicans, advising the Argentines, advising everybody under the sun on how to do it. They've got a “how to” corps. It's incredible.

Q: Is everybody sending their intelligent sons to the University of Chicago?

BOYATT: They're sending all the Chicago boys to these other countries to advise them. They send them to Harvard Business School now, they're smarter than that.

Q: Did Pat Derian, who was head of Human Rights, who was a zealot of the first order, I suppose, did she come down to Chile?

BOYATT: No, she didn't come while we were there. I think that we convinced her...I mean, we were doing all the reporting, and the reporting was accurate. We weren't pulling any punches, we were trying to help get people accused of political crimes out of jail, we had an amnesty program, we brought 1000-1200 of them to the States. We made a real difference on the human rights side down there. We got a lot of people out, and we kept a lot of others from being killed, by our special pleading. It was really an incredible situation, Stuart. We were absolutely in the middle from everybody's point of view. We were saving the lives, and getting people out of the country, that three years earlier had been killing Americans from the extreme left, from the Miristas. And we had our former enemies, all of whom had done nothing but denounce the United States all of their lives, coming into the embassy and asking us to get cousin Fulano out, or whatever. It was the perfect example of the United States in the middle, and of an embassy in the middle.

Q: So from this hot house you went to Upper Volta as ambassador.

BOYATT: Yes, do you think that was an exile, Stuart, or what?

Q: Well, I don't know, '78 to '80. Being an ambassador is something, but at the same time Upper Volta doesn't rate very high on the radar in foreign policy.

BOYATT: Well, beggars can't be choosers, old boy.

Q: Well, this is the entree for many Foreign Service officers by getting a post in Africa.

BOYATT: Well, exactly, and I was young, I was 45, and I considered it a great honor. I went off to Ouagadougou with flags flying.

Q: Do you have any idea how the appointment came about? Was there any problem with you?

BOYATT: No, I think it came about...it had nothing to do with politics with the big P, it came about because a lot of senior people in AF, Dick Moose, the Assistant Secretary, and Bill Harrop, the Deputy, and Lannon Walker, the deputy, they were all people I had known earlier in my career who respected me, I guess, and saw me as a hard charger. Ouaga is not a place you send a 60 year old who wants a retirement post. I mean, it's tough out there, and I was young and dumb, who's more perfect that that?

Q: What was the situation? We're talking about the '78-80 period in Upper Volta.

BOYATT: That was the era of the great Sahelian drought. Not unlike the drought on the east coast of Africa now, except that we had no civil war to match it, or series of civil wars. The focus of everything was A.I.D., so essentially while there was a Foreign Minister, and I did see him, and I saw the president, and we tried to get them to vote our way, and to open up their own political process. Essentially, it was a management job, and I spent most of my time on A.I.D. I discovered, this will amuse you, we distributed food aid, direct

aid, everything, all in maybe 18 million dollars a year, and I once sat down and calculated the cost of having the A.I.D. mission there, plus the A.I.D. contractors, and that came to another 18 million. So it cost us a dollar to distribute a dollar's worth of development, and I said, this is ridiculous. You can't get there from here, you can't do that. So I went on this great campaign to reduce the A.I.D. mission which, of course, you know how A.I.D. is, they fought it, and I won some battles. I used to get cables from Dick Moose which would say, “Well, the thundering herd from A.I.D. came into my office again this morning. What have you done now?” That sort of stuff, very amusing. But he knew in his heart that I was right. Our method of delivering development is the most inefficient in the world. I think I sent one cable once that said we'd be better off if we just bought West African francs and baled them up, put them in a C-47, flew around the country and kicked 18 million dollars out of the window. We'd probably have a better impact on the economy. And we probably would have.

Q: I suspect we would have.

BOYATT: I wish I had known then, what I know now about the private sector, about business in general, and how things really happen. Never, never, never give money to a government. At best governments are inefficient, particularly Third World governments, and at worse, they are corrupt beyond imagining. And in Upper Volta, as in most of the rest of the Third World, it was both. We'd put X amount of money into a project that we would do through the Agriculture Ministry, and by the time their inefficiencies, and their corruption was finished, we were getting 30 percent on the dollar. And then they weren't the right kinds of projects because we always depended on some government ministry to keep them implemented. If you have to give somebody money, give it to a private entrepreneur who has some reason to keep doing whatever it is you want him to do.

Q: Did you find yourself going out and looking at A.I.D. projects which had gotten a lot of attention, and then the attention was switched somewhere else?

BOYATT: Absolutely. abso-bloody-lutely. I remember one, and I wish I could remember the name of this project, they even did an article on it in the National Geographic once. We went off to some place up in the boonies, and we built this huge God damned fence around about a county, around about 40-50,000 acres. And this was supposed to be a model agricultural station, and we poured in a lot of money to improve the grasses, and we had sheds to keep animals in, and a veterinary shop, and a laboratory, and plows, the whole thing. And this was supposed to have a profound impact on the herder economy in the northern part of the country. And I went there about four or five years after the project. It was the most incredible thing you can imagine. The one thing that was true was, that inside the fence it was green, and outside the fence it was a mess, it was brown. But the fence was broken in several places, the herds were scattered, and the little test tubes and beakers in all the laboratories were broken, and dust encrusted. Nobody that was supposed to be there was there, it was the most incredible God damned thing you've ever seen. I can't imagine that A.I.D. took me up there to show that to me because all it did was to confirm all of my worst suspicions about A.I.D., and the process of delivering development. Incredible!

Q: Tom, you've had business experience, you're not a professional A.I.D. person, what was your analysis at that time? What was the problem with A.I.D. as far as in Upper Volta of trying to deliver?

BOYATT: The problem with A.I.D. is that it is a huge bureaucracy that does nothing but design projects, and justify those projects, both to its own bureaucracy and to the Congress. A.I.D. itself never delivers a nickel's worth of development. That's all done by contractors. So you have this huge bureaucratic overhead, then they go out and hire as many contractors as there are A.I.D. people to actually go out and dig the wells, and make the plows, or whatever, so you have double the bureaucracy, and it channels all of its money through governments. It does everything absolutely the wrong way. It should all be done the other way. It should be done through the private sector.

Q: Are there any countries that do it through the private sector? Did you observe any?

BOYATT: Oh yes. A lot of today's World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank, lending is done through private institutions now. If I had my druthers, I'd wipe A.I.D. out, and I'd reconstitute development offices as adjuncts of the State Department, and make developments especially within the State Department/Foreign Service institution. Something I understand was recently recommended by a Presidential commission. A.I.D. is totally bankrupt now. Nobody believes in it. A.I.D. never restructured an economy in its life, and it simply went in there and did things through government bureaucracies, and more often than not they made things worse.

How? Let me tell you how. What do you do, Stuart, if you go into a country that can barely feed itself, and has no money to import food, and if you go in there and you institute child health systems that double the population in three years. Is that good for development? It isn't, it just isn't. We never concentrated on the right end of development. What we should have been working for all along was increased agriculture production, and population control. Those two things, and nothing else. But we spent our time, and our money, on medical, educational, everything you can think of. Women in development, every trendy thing that came along in Washington that had a constituency in Washington, had a project overseas. I just think we've done it all wrong.

And the people who have done it right, the Koreans, the Taiwanese, the Chileans, they've all done it through the private sector—the Japanese, the Germans. We have to reorient the whole thing.

Q: What was your impression? I mean you'd been outside this, and this is your first time in the African Bureau, of the so-called Africanists, and the African Bureau, as a support staff?

BOYATT: Like everybody else, there were a certain number of people that were in the AF Bureau for romantic reasons. I've no big impressions along those lines.

Q: In other words, there wasn't any great difference between the ARA Bureau, and the African Bureau?

BOYATT: ...and the NEA Bureau. I would say that the NEA Bureau was the best of those three bureaus, but that's a private, prejudice analysis. By and large people did a good job under difficult circumstances. The real problems were much bigger than that, Stuart, they were strategic.

Q: You went back to ARA, to Colombia...

BOYATT: You haven't asked me, Stuart, about baseball.

Q: No, let me ask you about baseball.

BOYATT: They had this wonderful institution in West Africa. It may have come up in some of your other interviews, called West African International Softball Tournament, WAIST. And the first time I ever heard about it, I was reading an international Herald Tribune in Chile, where we also had a good softball team, a good league. And there was a guy out in left field making a catch under a baobab tree, and it was a little article in the international Herald Tribune about the league. I said, “God, I wish I could play in that league,” and somebody up there must have been listening, because within a year I was playing in that league. And what it was, each embassy had a team. Most of the embassies had Little Leagues, and they'd pick an all-star team from the league, from all their teams. And every long weekend there would be a tournament, like over George Washington's birthday, Labor Day and July Fourth, at one of the embassies, and the host embassy would invite all the others in, and there would be three days, we'd play two games a day, for six days, and there would be a party every night, and everyone would go home. But it was great for morale because it got people out. Even if you went from Ouaga to Bamako, it was a big deal. If you went from Ouaga to Dakar it was a really big deal because the weather is nice there, it's more civilized. So we had a lot of fun, and the teams all had humorous

names: Ouagadougou's team was called Sahel's Angels, and the guys from Nouakchott were called The Camelot, and Bamako was named after their local beer, where they called themselves the So-So Malleau. Niger was Whales, Tails, something or other, Drinking Society. But anyway, it was a huge morale pleaser.

The first time I ever had to leave the country to go to one of these softball teams—you know ambassadors have to request a permission of the Assistant Secretary—so I sent Moose a cable that said, “Ouagadougou's Sahel's Angels” are playing in Dakar next weekend. I'm the first basement on our team, and I'd like to leave the country to participate in the tournament.” And Moose sent me back a cable that said, “I'm surprised that you can make it to first base, much less play the position. By all means go.” It was the single, biggest, morale maker in the whole region. People loved it.

Q: Well then, we get you off to ARA.

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: How did that come about? This is still the Carter administration, and you went to Colombia where you served from '80 to '83.

BOYATT: Yes.

Q: Did this come as a bolt out of the blue?

BOYATT: Yes. You have to remember that my predecessor had been kidnaped.

Q: Yes, Diego Asencio.

BOYATT: And held in the Dominican embassy, and had gone through all of that. And as you also remember from my earlier career, I was hijacked by Palestinians once. And I think to some extent they were looking for somebody with counterterrorist experience, which I had, and I had served in Latin America, spoke Spanish fluently, why not? But

again, it was not a political job, it was an inside job as the Director General, Harry Barnes, had gotten me that position.

Q: What was the situation in Colombia while you were there?

BOYATT: It was a case in which the entire policy focus of the US government was shifting from the usual concerns to the drug problem, and that wound up being our primary goal to disrupt the flow—first of marijuana, and subsequently of cocaine, from Colombia to the United States.

Q: What sort of weapons did you have during the time you were there?

BOYATT: Well, we had training programs. We brought in a batch of helicopters that we gave to the Colombian army for use in counter-narcotics activity. In those days we were fighting to get the Colombians to spray the marijuana crops with paraquat. One of the problems was, of course, we couldn't use it in our own country because the EPA wouldn't let us. So we had the delightful proposition of trying to convince the Colombian government to do something that our own government wouldn't do. It made it very difficult. In the end they did agree to spraying, and in the end we pretty much took out the marijuana production in Colombia, but while we were doing that, unbeknownst to us, Colombia was very rapidly becoming a major transshipment point for cocaine. By the time I left, while one could have legitimately declared, if not an end to the war, at least several victorious battles in the marijuana war, we had almost no victories in the cocaine war.

Q: What was your impression of the Colombian government during this period? How did you deal with them?

BOYATT: Colombia is like Chile in the sense that they have a very capable leadership level. European origins, well educated, and invariably it is indeed elite. We dealt very well with the elite. The further down the line you went, the more difficult it became. That is to say, in my judgment, there were no corrupt ministers, but could the narcs corrupt a

regional general? Not to mention the captain in charge of an airport detail? Yes, of course, they could, and did, and do.

Q: At that time were we involved in trying to get intelligence, paying informers, and all this, to find out what was going on?

BOYATT: The DEA was there, and their essential MO is “bribe and bust”, so in that sense we were. The CIA in those days didn't want to have anything to do with the drug problem, neither did the Defense Department. Now, of course, they're falling all over themselves to participate in the drug war because...

Q: ...the Soviet Union is gone...

BOYATT: That's right, and they've got to justify their existence, and their budgets, and so on. It's really funny because literally I could not get the CIA to focus on it. I came back two years ago and did a survey of narcotics reporting for the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, and in the process of doing that I went out to the CIA. They took me into an office, and said, “This is our narcotics office.” And I'm telling you, Stuart, you know those little glassed-in cubbyholes, as far as I could see...all I could see was God damned cubbyholes, with people in them working. There must have been hundreds of people down there, on the Drug Task Force.

Q: With mixed results. What about the terrorist role? The M-19—this was the group that had kidnaped Asencio. What was life like there?

BOYATT: Life was horrible. I mean everybody in the damn country was trying to kill, or kidnap, the American Ambassador, or his wife, or his children. We lived a very confined, tension-filled, life. Our youngest son was 8 weeks old when we got there, and neither he nor Maxine, much less myself, ever went anywhere without guards, drivers, the “whole nine yards”. In my case, a follow car, sometimes a lead car and a follow car.

Q: Your concern was not the drug lords at this time?

BOYATT: They were a concern too. One of the reasons people say, “Well, it's worse now than when you were there.” Well, yes and no. The drug lords are stronger, but the M-19 is now a political party, instead of a terrorist organization. A lot of the left wing has come in from the cold, and they were very much in the cold when I was there. So my feeling is that the left wing threat was greater when I was there. The narcotics threat existed, but wasn't as great as it is today.

Q: On the policy level, you were there at the end of the Carter and the beginning of the Reagan administration, and all hell was breaking loose in Central America, El Salvador, and Nicaragua at the time. Did you find yourself getting involved in this as far as pushing an American view?

BOYATT: Yes. Naturally we wanted Colombian support for what we were doing in Central America, and we had two things going for us in that regard. One was that the Colombians occupied, and held, an island called San Andres which the Nicaraguans claimed. So there was a territorial conflict between Nicaragua and Colombia. So in spite of their desires not to line up with the gringos, there was a built-in self-interest reason why they could identify with us against the Sandinistas. That was on that side. The other interesting thing was, I guess sometime in my first year, year and a half there, the army captured an entire M-19 column. They caught the guy that had led the take-over in the embassy, and lots of others. And they caught them with all of their equipment, and with a lot of their information records, and so on. And from those records it was clear that the Cubans had financed, and facilitated, this invasion, and of course the Colombians had no choice but to sever relations with Cuba, which they did. We sort of had a helping hand in Central America from that regard, too. So it wasn't too hard, even though there was a liberal government in power, it wasn't too difficult to get them to support us, at least verbally, in the Central America arena.

Q: What about the coastal island treaty? Did you get involved in this?

BOYATT: Yes. It was finally signed during my era.

Q: What was our position?

BOYATT: We were trying to get rid of these silly little islands, but the problem was that...

Q: You were talking about the...

BOYATT: Yes, the islands. Stuart, to be perfectly honest, I can't remember how we came to have possession of them.

Q: Probably some whaling ship, or something like that.

BOYATT: Yes, it could have been a whaling station, or it could have been the Spanish American War, it could have been the Panama thing, because Panama was a province of Colombia. But for whatever reason, we had sovereignty over the damn things which we were prepared to cede to the Colombians but to get it done legally was very involved, and it required legislative action, and the Senate had 8 million other things to do, other than worry about de-accessioning these little islands. But eventually we got it done.

Q: I assume something like that played well within Colombia, didn't it?

BOYATT: Yes, of course.

Q: What about the appearance on the scene of Ronald Reagan? I gather that at least in ARA, it wasn't Reagan, but the people who come over there particularly with support by Jesse Helms and all, it was a pretty nasty take-over...

BOYATT: Yes, it was.

Q: Somewhat akin to your problem in Chile, but this one was even worse because it got personal.

BOYATT: Sure, because they cleared out the people.

Q: How did that impact on you, and what you were seeing there?

BOYATT: I didn't get to Bogota until early November, and by that time Reagan had already been elected, and although I was appointed by Carter, and got advice and consent while Carter was still in the White House, for the first few months Carter was still the President until January '81. It was a lame duck administration, so I didn't know what they were going to do with me, whether they were going to keep me, fire me, or what. But what you say is true. When the Reaganauts came in they cleaned out the ARA Bureau. I can't remember who was the Assistant Secretary.

Q: Bill Bowdler. He was given no time, I guess.

BOYATT: Yes. He was told to clean out his desk, and they were equally abrupt with the Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and I'm trying to think who was brought in as Assistant Secretary?

Q: Tom Enders.

BOYATT: Was it Enders right from the beginning?

Q: Did this have any particular repercussions on you? You had been there, and obviously were reading the previous cables to see what our policy was as far as Colombia. Was there any change in our policy towards Colombia?

BOYATT: There wasn't a lot of change in our policy toward Colombia. We were still interested in getting their support...I mean Central America was a problem for the Democrats too. The Republicans became more active, our policy became more

aggressive, therefore it became more difficult to get Latinos to side with us, and we were pushing Latinos around. But the drug war remained, our desire to have Colombian support for international issues remained. Our desire for Colombia to be a functioning democracy remained. It was not earth shaking like it had been in Chile.

Q: A couple of things. I note that the Colombians have a force in Sinai.

BOYATT: Yes, that's one of my great coups.

Q: How did that come about? You might explain what the Sinai legal force was.

BOYATT: With the Peace Accords at Camp David, the peace between Egypt and Israel provided for an international force in the Sinai to interpose between the two parties, and to perform certain other functions. They sent an “All Diplomatic and Consular Posts” cable, “Would your country be interested in participating in this force?” And they had a hell of a time getting countries to do it. But I had a very good relation with the Defense Minister, Camacho Teiva, I met with him one day and asked him how he would view that? He said, “Let me discuss it with my generals.” And the terms were really very generous, we paid them more than they were paying their soldiers. It's good training, it's rotated every six months, and the long and short of it is, I sold it. We were the first serious country...Somoa agreed to do it, but we were the first serious country that agreed to participate.

Q: Also, Colombia is rather proud of its role in the Korean War, weren't they?

BOYATT: Yes, and the chaps that were in charge of the army at that point, had been junior officers during Korea, so I was able to call on all of that. They had served with the Americans, and the Brits, and the Turks, and South Koreans, as lieutenants, and they all remembered that. You know how recall is, very selective. And I said, “Here's a chance for this next generation to do something similar.”

Q: The Falklands? What's the Spanish term?

BOYATT: Malvinas.

Q: This was a crisis that came up in 1982 between Argentina and Great Britain over who owned possession of the islands, and the Argentines invaded the islands, and the British responded, and putting us sort of in the middle between this firm ally and Latin America. How did you all handle that?

BOYATT: Well, we were lucky, Stuart, because we took the position with the Colombians that it would be very difficult for them to support the acquisition by force of a distant island, by the country that claimed that island because of proximity. The message being, if the Argentines can get away with it with the Falklands, maybe the Nicaraguans can get away with it with San Andres. It's only 20 miles from Bluefields, Nicaragua, and its 700-800 miles from Colombia, whatever it is. Emotionally they were very much on the Argentinian side. This is Anglo versus Latino. This goes back to Elizabeth and Philip, and Sir Francis Drake, and all of the competition in the new world between Anglos and Hispanos, and they emotionally lined up with “the Ches”. But very, very difficult for them to be aggressively overt in their support of the Argentines because of their own situation. The result was, that they did the minimum they had to do. It seems to me we convinced them to abstain on a couple of votes in the OAS, and the UN, whereas everyone else in Latin America was voting with the Argentines.

Q: Just a couple of other things. Did you get involved with Garcia Marquez, who got the Nobel Prize? What was the situation?

BOYATT: The situation was that Gabriel Garcia Marquez received the Nobel Prize, and the issue was, “Are we going to issue him a visa, or not?”

Q: He's a Colombian, and very popular, by the way, unlike most Nobel Prize winners, he was really read in the United States. In fact he was sort of one of the gurus of the "70s and "80s generation.

BOYATT: Yes, and the first of the Latin American authors to make it big. The problem that Garcia Marquez was, and is, a Castro supporter, a Marxist, and we had good evidence that he had carried messages for the M-19. Well, as you know, it's against the law to send someone to the United States who has been involved in terrorism. And we had pretty good evidence that he was involved in terrorism, so we turned the visa down, as I recall. And there was a great hue and cry about censorship. Of course, the issue didn't have a damn thing to do with censorship. Anybody who wanted to buy and read his novels, was free to do so. The question was whether he had a right to travel to the United States under the law, or not. I suppose we must have eventually given him a visa, grudgingly.

Q: Were we calling the shots, I mean initially we turned him down in Colombia, or...

BOYATT: That's my memory, or at least stalled on it and then got turned around by Washington.

Q: President Reagan came through there, didn't he?

BOYATT: It was a disaster.

Q: Could you explain?

BOYATT: By this time Belisario Betancur had become president, conservative, and a Hispanic nationalist/chauvinist, in extreme degree. The conservatives are a right-wing party in Colombia, but very nationalistic. I did a cable once the title of which was, “Belisario Betancur, Latin populist, or Peron without the jack boots,” or something along those lines. Anyway, Betancur was very emotionally on the side of the Argentines in the Falklands conflict, and we clearly supported the Brits all the way. And when Reagan came in late '82, after we had worked out that he was going to come, but before he got there, he made some statement wherein he said that in the Anglo-Argentine conflict, clearly Maggie

Thatcher was the best man in the fight, or something like that, and Betancur went up the wall.

Meanwhile, we had agreed to the trip, and we've got these advance teams out there, and you know how they push everybody around, an incredible combination of ignorance and arrogance. They know nothing about the country, but they have to have things their way. Again, we're in the middle, we're trying to mediate between the advance people and the Colombians, and the advance people are...you know, Deaver's crowd, are pushing everybody around and demanding this, and demanding that, and the Colombians are getting madder and madder, and we're trying to do damage control in the embassy, and it's clear that this thing is very close to being out of control.

One of the jobs that I had was to relay the content of Reagan's remarks on all public occasions, toasts, and whatever there happened to be. The major public statement was what Reagan would say in his toast at a luncheon hosted by Betancur. Seven or eight days before the trip, I delivered a text of Reagan's remarks, and asked for the Colombian text in return. I didn't get it, and I didn't get it, and I kept pushing, and I thought, “Trouble.” I knew it was trouble, I didn't get it. Reagan took off on the first leg of his trip, which was to Brazil, I still hadn't gotten it. The night before he was to leave, I got a copy of Betancur's remarks which were literally insulting. I didn't even send this text to the party because I knew they would have cancelled the trip. I went to the Foreign Minister, and I said, “My President is making a toast which is friendly, non-substantive, and brief. Your president is making a toast which is unfriendly, hits on all policy points, and is long. Unless you can get this changed, I'm going to recommend that the President not come to Colombia. I cannot have him here and have your president saying this. That's just no go. I don't want to do this, but I really have no choice. You're putting me in an impossible situation.” He knew I was right. He's the one that had been putting me off under pressure from the president, so he went back, and he got it changed significantly, but not totally.

So I cabled it off to the party in Brasilia, and I said, “You'll find this hard to believe, but what you're receiving here are the significantly toned down remarks of president Betancur.” Then I got back another instruction to get it changed further. Anyway, that's about a 98 percent downside potential, and about a 2 percent upside potential by this time. Everybody in the Colombian bureaucracy is irritated, they're really angry at the Secret Service for insisting on this, and insisting on that.

One of the things that really galled the Colombians was, they didn't want a Secret Service guy following Reagan around while Reagan and Betancur were reviewing troops on the arrival and the departure. And at the end of the pre-trip process, we all thought that we had gotten the Secret Service to agree to that. Anyway, Reagan arrives, and we're all worried as we can be about security. In Colombia security is always a challenge, and it was a challenge then, and here's this 70 year old guy sailing in at 8-9,000 feet, one day's planned activities, and then out the same day. I think he got in about 11:00. Well, 11:00 comes, the plane lands, Reagan pops out of the door, super Ronnie, and he looks great, and he bounces down the steps, all smiles and greets Betancur, and they review the troops, and as they review the troops this frigging Secret Service guy sneaks out and follows Reagan, step by step. The Colombians were fit to be tied because they figured we had double-crossed them. We'd said that the problem was solved, and the problem wasn't solved. From that point on logistically, the trip was a nightmare. Everything the Colombians could do to screw us up, they did. And I'm there with Shultz and the President, and there's not a lot I can do, the DCM and everybody else in the embassy is trying to make it work as best they can, but it's not easy.

I remember at one point, when we went back into the palace after laying a wreath, and we were going up some stairs—you know, there's always the question of who's going to sit in on these high level meetings—and I was going up the stairs, and I heard this voice behind me saying, “Hey, Tom,”—and there's Baker and Deaver standing there, first I couldn't see him in this mass of people—Baker and Deaver standing there. Meanwhile Shultz and

Reagan, and Betancur, are going up the stairs and I was supposed to be with them in the meeting, and Baker said, “Hey, Tom, if we can't get in, the President isn't going in,” which I think was a bluff. But anyway, I came back and I convinced the two policemen there, in Spanish, to let Baker and Deaver through and they came up with us, although they didn't go into the meeting. But that was just an example. That kind of stuff was going on all over town, at all levels.

Reagan, meanwhile, was having a great trip. He was having a hell of a good time. He thought it was tremendously successful. Every other briefcase carrier in his group thought it was a disaster, and from an administrative point it was a disaster because they didn't get in, they didn't get everything they wanted. Anyway, we did what we had to do. We got through the toasts, they weren't too bad. Ronnie was very satisfied with the trip, we're flying in helicopters back to the take-off at 3:30 or whatever it is, and we can see some fires down below set by the rioters who were rioting because of his trip. We get out to the airport, he reviews the troops on his take-off—this time, I think, with the Foreign Minister, I can't remember—and as he starts to review, the same Secret Service guy leaves the crowd and starts to walk behind him. And as they're walking along this Colombian colonel comes in at an angle, and literally throws a body block into this guy, and knocks him right on his ass. And then he sits on him until the review is finished. Can you believe it? Sits on him until the review is finished, Reagan still thinks he's had a great trip, and from his point of view he has. And he bounds up the steps, everybody gets in the plane, they close the door, and they go home.

The bureaucrats, in this case Deaver, Baker, and all the staff types, are furious because they weren't well taken care of from their perspective. Reagan subsequently, and Shultz, think it is a very successful trip, and that's my experience along those lines. Boy, if I had it to do over let me tell you I'd tell him to stay home. It was a mess.

Q: Did you leave shortly after that?

BOYATT: That was in December, I left in May.

Q: Is there anything else to cover?

BOYATT: On Colombia?

Q: Yes.

BOYATT: No, I don't think so. There were always difficult human issues. I closed the consulate in Medellin, and in Cali, because we couldn't protect our people. We had two or three officers down there who were very exposed. We couldn't afford to put enough muscle in place to keep them safe. That was hugely unpopular, as you can imagine, because it meant the people of those two cities had to travel to Bogota to get their visas, and I was damned if I was going to risk American lives to facilitate visa issuance. I closed the USIS libraries for the same reason, very unpopular. Established a policy that people had to live in apartment houses for the same reason. You could put one guy guarding the doors of an apartment house much easier. That was hugely unpopular. It was no fun, Stuart, believe me, and it was even worse for my successors because they eventually wound up eliminating dependents.

Q: You retired from the Foreign Service after this?

BOYATT: I did.

Q: Just to complete the picture, obviously you were young, why did you do it?

BOYATT: Well, the jobs that they were coming up with were repetitive. There's not much difference between being ambassador in Colombia, and ambassador in Venezuela, much less Guatemala. My wife was opposed to going back and taking the children back to a totally militarized, terrorist environment. I was myself beginning to question the career for the first time, because short of becoming the Director General, or an Assistant Secretary,

or an ambassador in some plush place like Spain or Denmark or whatever, which wasn't likely, I really began to ask myself, if I had a future in the Foreign Service. I mean a real future. A future that would be as exciting, and as rewarding, and as much fun as the past had been.

And about the time I'm having these kinds of thoughts, Frank Carlucci called me up. He had become president, and chief operating officer, of Sears World Trade, and was just organizing that trading company. And he literally made me an offer I couldn't refuse. So I accepted the offer, and I went into the Director General, who was then Roy Atherton, to resign, and he said, “Oh, don't do that. Go on leave without pay. Who knows whether you'll like the private sector, or what it will be like a year from now.” So I did that. I went on leave without pay, and worked for a year at Sears World Trade, at the end of that time I was making even more money, and the Foreign Service, if anything, was looking worse, and less fun than it had been before. So I just made a strategic decision to stay in the private sector, and make a lot of money, and have a different kind of fun for the last 10 or 15 years of my career.

And you know, Stuart, you know I love the Foreign Service. I loved it then, and I love it now. My AFSA time, and so on, but for everybody there comes a time to quit, and you should do it when that time comes, because otherwise you're going to be very sad, and disappointed.

Q: Amen, amen. Thank you very much, Tom.

[Note: Ambassador Boyatt's presentation of September 30, 1992 to the incoming class of Foreign Service officers covers the period he dealt with Cyprus and his difficulties with the Secretary of State.]

End of interview